

9 AMAZING PLAYABLE DEMOS ON YOUR FREE PS2 DVD!



PlayStation®2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA

12 HOURS
OF GAMEPLAY

9

PLAYABLE
DEMOS

CRACKED!

MATRIX RELOADED

Every glitch solved in our
in-depth 6 page playguide!

EVERYTHING OR NOTHING

Bond ditches the rule
book in his new shooter.
Find out if it pays off!

OFFICIAL REVIEW

QUICK AND THE DEAD

Namco's answer to Metal
Gear Solid blasts onto PS2.
Official verdict inside!



WIN A
CAR!

You could drive away
in our Nissan 180SX.
Grab the coupon inside!

HUGE
PLAYABLE
DEMO DVD!
ONLY WITH THIS
MAGAZINE!

272
GAMES RATED!

- MACE GRIFFIN ■ ATV 2
- DEAD TO RIGHTS
- DIE HARD AND HEAPS MORE!

FROM THE MAKERS OF

GRAND

THEFT

AUTO

EXCLUSIVE!

The most controversial
game ever! Face to
face with *Manhunt*

GRAND
FINAL

We tackle Rugby 2004
and AFL Live 2004
Get the score inside!

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HAWK'S
UNDERGROUND

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Building! Running!
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be the same again!

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ISSUE 18 SEPTEMBER 2003
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DERWENT HOWARD

9

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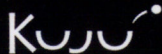
18

WARHAMMER
40,000

FIRE WARRIOR

For the greater good
You are Kais - Fire Warrior
The Next 24 Hours
could be your finest
or your last...

"an early contender for
the console first-person
shooter of the year"
- Gamespy



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SEPTEMBER 2003



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NAZ'S TOP 2

ATV OFFROAD FURY
(SONY) OUT NOW

After a long break, Richie and I have revved up the old ATV rivalry this month. Not the longest single player game in the world but easily one of the best multiplayer experiences available. And don't believe anything Richie says about winning – that punks just got lucky.

MACE GRIFFIN:
BOUNTY HUNTER
(VIVENDI) NOW

Plays a lot like an Xbox game you may have heard of – rhymes with J-Lo – and packs plenty of action per square metre.



RICHIE'S TOP 2

ATV OFFROAD FURY
(SONY) OUT NOW

It's back to another oldie again for me. Narayan and I have enjoyed a friendly rivalry for years now and no racer gets more competitive than this one. I'm \$26 on top at the moment ...

XIII
(UBISOFT) OCTOBER

We've been lucky enough to have an early build of this game in the office and I'm having a great time blasting away. The graphics look top-notch and are a nice change from most other FPS games. See you soon Merrick & Rosso! Ha!



"Our rules should change with the times ..."

EDITOR'S LETTER



Got an opinion on censorship? If you don't, then now's the time to have one. All of OPS2's valued readers – whether they be six or sixty, should know the facts. Fact is, that in comparison to most modern countries, Australia's classification system is limited.

The most "adult" a game can possibly be deemed in Australia is M15+. So what? What that M15+ rating means is that unlike our foreign cousins (including those in Europe, Asia and North America), we can only see altered versions of games (rated in these countries as R18+) to fit under our guidelines. Worse still, the "powers that be" can ban something altogether. The recent movie *Ken Park* is a case in point. Will you ever get to see this movie that the rest of the world is talking about? Probably not.

Granted, complete bans and altered versions are rare. In fact, to date, it is true to say that they can be basically disregarded as "no big deals". Who even noticed the changes in *GTA 3* or *Vice City*? I know I couldn't have cared less. But the crux of the matter is that when we as a society starts having what we see altered or filtered, then it becomes a society straying into dangerous territory.

Everything that we enjoy including videogames, movies and music are broad, and all have content that varies wildly. Simply, some are suitable for kids and some for adults. This is a fact that is never going to change and the suggestion of introducing an R18+ rating is not an endorsement for a "free for all". Another fact is that the generations who first grew up with videogames in the 70's and 90's are now adults – many of whom still play videogames. Our rules should change with the times in reflecting this.

The whole premise behind only having an M15+ rating is an admirable one, but it doesn't work. The idea is that only games that are suitable for children and young teens can only be released. It's to protect the children. But how much protection can it offer when a game can just be cosmetically altered? I believe an R18+ rating that was enforced in stores would be more effective.

Check out our exclusive feature on *Manhunt*, starting on page 38. Here's an "adult" game sure to attract plenty of controversy. It'll be interesting to see if you'll ever get to play it for yourself ...

Richie Young

RICHIE YOUNG
Editor

OPS2 WANTS YOU!

STAFF WRITER NEEDED

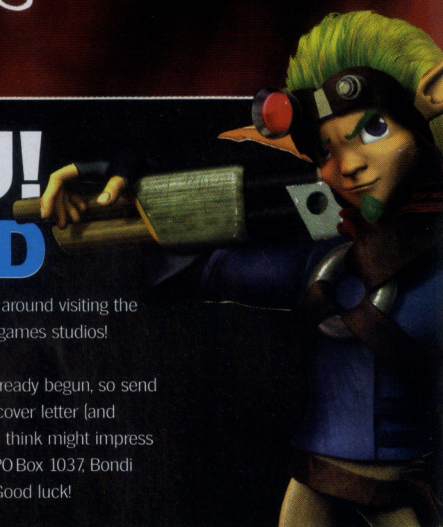
Ever wondered what it would be like to work on Australia's most successful and authoritative videogames magazine? OPS2 will soon be offering a fantastic start to a talented and aspiring videogames journalist. We are in search of an exceptional young writer who possesses the qualities to really make a mark in the industry.

You must have solid writing credentials, a sound knowledge of pop culture and the gift of the gab. Most importantly though, all OPS2 staff must have a great sense of humour!

This could be your launching pad into the world's fastest growing entertainment industry. You could soon be playing games

for a living and jetting around visiting the world's most exciting games studios! Still interested?

Our search has already begun, so send your CV along with a cover letter (and anything else that you think might impress us!) to: Richie Young, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction NSW 2022. Good luck!



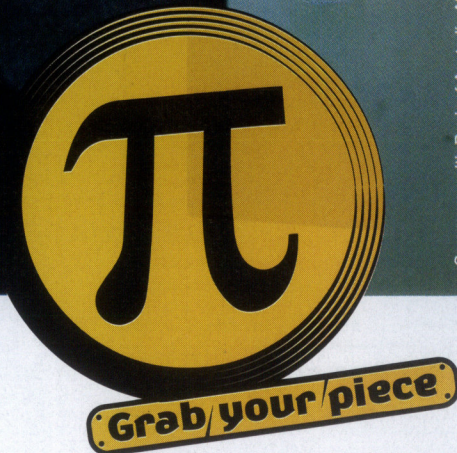
My bank almost gets me.

That's scary.
Which Bank?



We've been listening to π members. They wanted more from their money, more out of life and games, games, games! So, for a limited time, π members can get \$10 off EA Games, Lord of the Rings 'Return of the King' game.* For this and a whole lot more, check out commbank.com.au/pi/ps2

Important information. Game available in stores 21 November 2003. Offer expires 31 December 2003. Voucher and details available online. The Lord of the Rings 'Return of the King' game is rated M15+
*An alternative game will be available for π members under 15 years of age.



CommonwealthBank





ON THE DVD PLAYABLE DEMOS

OTHER MAGAZINES LET YOU WATCH, OPS2 LETS YOU PLAY...

STARSKY & HUTCH



PUBLISHER: EMPIRE
GAME TYPE: DRIVING
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1-2

WE'RE BIG FANS of the adventures of street-wise David Starsky and softly spoken Ken 'Hutch' Hutchinson as they cruise those mean streets. The plain-clothed detectives terrorised the bad muthas of Bay City with their big guns, bigger cardigans and the coolest car ever shown on network TV – Starsky's cherry red Ford Torino – throughout the '70s.

Now's your chance to not only get behind the wheel as Starsky but lean out the window as Hutch and take some pot shots at the bad guys.

Our playable demo gives you one entire level as you attempt to stop a stolen car by any means necessary. Mainly that means shooting and ramming, but who knows what could happen? You can also shoot down and drive through the various targets to improve your handling, speed and the like.

And when you've mastered that you can then have a look across the page and go win yourself a trip to San Francisco. Dope.

How about this then? Not your usual run-of-the-mill disc here. No, first off the bat we've got a great *Starsky & Hutch* demo but as if that wasn't enough, we're giving you the chance to win yourself a trip to California, home of the boys themselves. Once you've found the right spots, marked the map and sent it to us you can move on to the rest of the disc. The challenge for Mace Griffin is to get off the first screen. It defeated Rich and took Fitz an age to beat off those first few flyers. Try it, you'll see what we mean. After that it's all plain sailing but there's plenty to see an' do, including one incredible video. Go see the *THUG*.

R. Young

RICHIE YOUNG

Editor

PS To use this DVD, load it up on your PS2. Then scroll between games and rolling demos with the **↓** and **↑** keys. To choose within a section use **←** and **→**. Press **⊗** to start up your choice. Please note, you may have to reset your PS2 after some demos.

YOUR DISC

Every issue, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine* brings you something no other magazine can – playable demos. Offering exclusive levels, tracks and missions, our playable DVD enables you try the very latest PS2 games before you buy, often weeks, even months before release. Why risk your hard-earned cash on a \$100 game when you can try it out on our cover-mounted DVD? From *GT3* and *MGS2* to *TimeSplitters 2* and *Final Fantasy X*, we've always featured playable demos of the games that matter. Throw in top quality video footage of the hits of the future and our DVD is the best bargain on the newsagent's shelves.

DISC PROBLEMS?

If your disc isn't working properly, simply send it back to this address for a replacement.
Demo Disc Returns
Official PlayStation 2 Magazine
Level 3, 75 Grafton St.
Bondi Junction, NSW, 2022



THE CONTROLS

D-pad/L-stick	Direction
⊗	Accelerate
⊕	Brake/reverse
△	Camera
⊙	Handbrake
□	Shoot



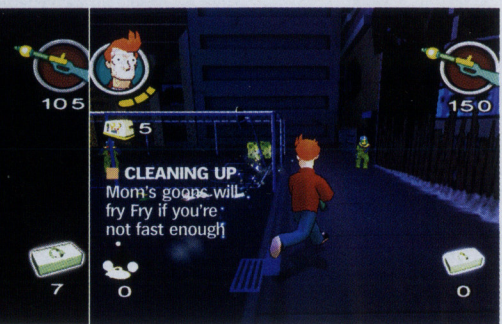
tip

Starsky's Torino is actually faster than most perps' cars. Bring 'em down by cutting them off and blasting away.

FUTURAMA

THE CONTROLS

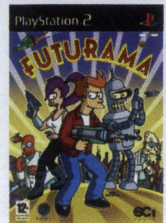
- | | |
|-------|-------------------|
| D-pad | Move |
| ⓧ | Attack/fire |
| Ⓐ | Action |
| ⓪ | Jump |
| Ⓟ | Charged fire |
| R3 | First-person view |
| Ⓛ | Lock target |
| Ⓛ/Ⓡ | Select weapon |



CLEANING UP:
Mom's gonna will fry Fry if you're not fast enough!

THE SOME-PEOPLE-THINK it's-freakin-hilarious-while-others-smile-politely cartoon series might have been canned but the future adventures of 20th Century slacker Fry, boorish robot Bender and the rest of the losers they hang out with live on in videogame format.

Here you get a nice slice of the action with Fry heading for 'old' New York to take down some hoboos with his laser gun as he tries to get to the Scrap Bar to find Bender. The controls are a little fruity so try and get used to the thing before throwing it away in anger – once you've got yourself past the opening fire-fest, things get a lot better.



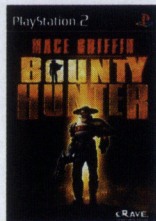
PUBLISHER: SCI
GAME TYPE:
PLATFORMER
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1

tip

You've got a limited time here so kill the first guards asap. Reinforcements will then open the door to the next area as they come to get you...

THE CONTROLS

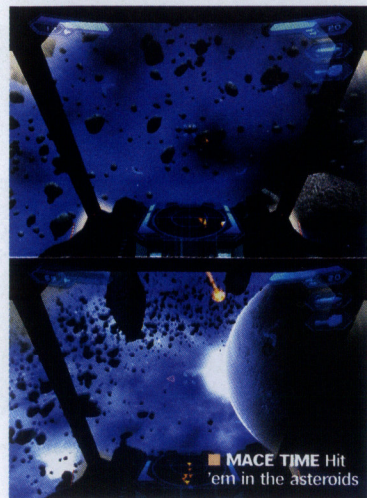
- | | |
|---------|----------------|
| D-pad | Move |
| L-stick | Strafe |
| ⓧ | Next target |
| ⓪ | Nearest target |
| Ⓐ | Change mode |
| Ⓛ | Fire missile |
| Ⓛ | Select missile |
| Ⓛ | Fire laser |
| Ⓛ | Select laser |



PUBLISHER: VIVENDI
UNIVERSAL
GAME TYPE: FIRST-
PERSON SHOOTER
OUT: 19 AUGUST
PLAYERS: 1

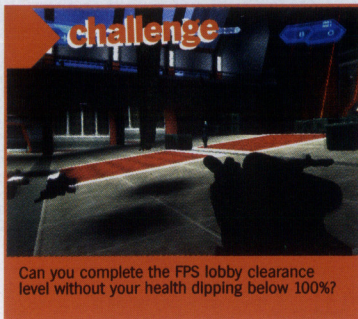
MACE GRIFFIN: BOUNTY HUNTER

HARD AS A DIAMOND ANVIL and grizzlier than a bear wearing a hornet-filled jockstrap, Mace Griffin is the latest in a long line of FPS hardmen with an incredibly short fuse and a permanently itchy trigger finger. You can read our review of the Griff's big 'n' blood-soaked adventure by turning to page 82 now. And dammit you should, but before you do why not 'be' the Mace and enjoy our huge, two-part demo. Blast fighters to crispy fragments in space, then park in the belly of a gigantic cruiser and go postal in cracking FPS style.



MACE TIME Hit 'em in the asteroids

challenge



Can you complete the FPS lobby clearance level without your health dipping below 100%?



SPACE CRISPS Fighters no more

tip

Notch quick kills in space by backing off and using the homing missiles to nobble your enemies. Safe!



Platinum

FINAL FANTASY X



PUBLISHER: SONY
GAME TYPE: RPG
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1

WITH THE RELEASE of the dress-toting *Final Fantasy X-2* imminent, here's another chance to acquaint yourself with its stunning predecessor if you haven't already. This demo version contains two playable sections from the start of the game, a dash through a disintegrating city and Tidus's first trek through Spira. The battle system is fairly simple to use but be sure to remember to refuel your health bar with potions every now and again.

As you meet the crew, note their strengths and weaknesses, and try out Valefor's overdrive mode, which can be sped up by selecting 'boost' in the aeon's battle menu. And enjoy the FMV – this game sets the benchmark in graphics that many others are still failing to reach.



THE CONTROLS

L-stick/D-pad Move
X Select
A Open inventory
B Cancel
C Scout for Blitzball
D Switch character (battle mode)
E Switch character (menu screen)

Attack an enemy with equipped weapon.

WHAT THE?
Who left that thing there?

Attack Skill Item
Tidus HP 75 MP 100
Baron HP 100 MP 100

TIDUS IS HIGH
Our hero gets nobbled by a special effect

25.7
6.2
Tidus HP 100 MP 100
Baron HP 100 MP 100

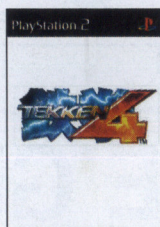
tip In Zanarkand, don't forget to touch the Save Sphere after defeating Sinspawn Amnes – it will restore all of your HP and MP!

TEKKEN 4

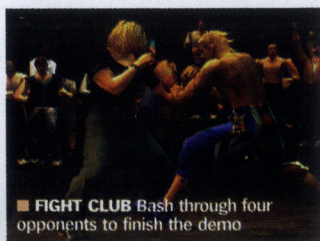
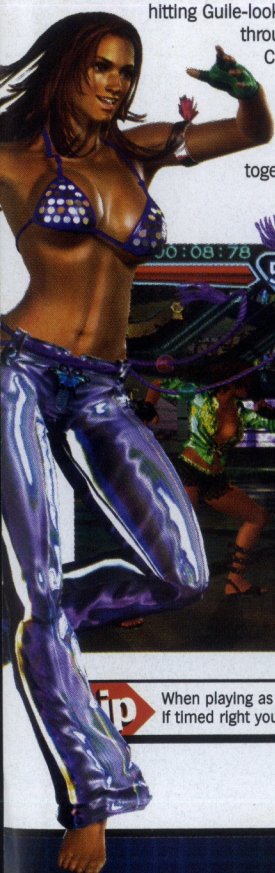
HERE'S NAMCO'S MOST popular fighter series in the final stages of its evolution. Select either the new character Christie, a foxy capoeira master who mimics Eddy's moves from *Tekken 3* or Paul, the hard-hitting Guile-lookalike with the five o'clock shadow. Bash through four opponents, including other newcomers Craig and Mar duk, to complete the demo.

Button-bashing won't get you very far but combos will soon occur through testing combinations of direction and button presses.

Pull backwards to block, press A and C together for a throw and try not to stare too long at Christie's cleavage.



PUBLISHER: SONY
GAME TYPE: BEAT-'EM-UP
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1 (1-2 FULL GAME)



FIGHT CLUB Bash through four opponents to finish the demo

THE CONTROLS

L-stick/D-pad Move
X Left kick
B Left punch
A Right punch
C Right kick

FOCUS NOW But not on that cleavage

ZONE OF THE ENDERS



PUBLISHER: ATARI
GAME TYPE: ADVENTURE
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1

THIS WAS FIRST featured way back in the early days of OPS2 but still looks as sweet and floaty as it ever did. And with *ZOE2* on the way (check out the demo in just two issues time) we thought it time you re-acquainted yourself with life in a mech suit.

The demo starts with you sat at the controls of your Jehuty orbital frame with an enemy mech dude bearing down hard on your shiny metal ass. Once you've completed the training sessions you have two tasks to polish off. Your first mission is to clear the area of badasses, including tough boss Viola. Once outta there you can have a pop at the squid-like Tempest, who appears to be having a bit of a bad day and is keen to take it out on you.



THE CONTROLS

D-pad/L-stick Movement
R-stick Targeting
X Down
B Shoot/slash
A Up
C Grab and strike
D Energy shield (hold)
E Dash/burst



MECH DANCE
Hey, twinkle toes!

tip When playing as Paul, try back and throw for a reversal. If timed right you'll counter any high attack.

tip Don't forget to pick up all the items dotted around the place – they enhance your mech capabilities.

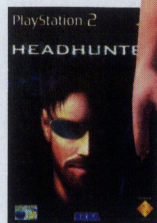
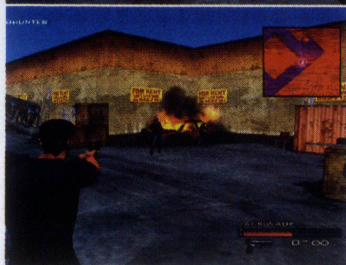
HEADHUNTER

HE'S BIG, HE'S BEARDED and he's definitely not attracted to men. Except when he's tracking them down, of course, as the future-cop bounty (head) hunter Jack Wade. In the full game big Jack has lost his memory and his job, and is drawn into a conspiracy that only his cunning stealth skills can solve.

In our demo you take control of big Jack to free informers being held hostage by a biker gang at a garage (or 'gas station', if you prefer). You get five minutes to find them and get them to talk to you. Simple, no?



LIFE'S A GAS
Jack's got just five minutes to rescue the hostages



PUBLISHER: SONY
GAME TYPE: ADVENTURE
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1

THE CONTROLS

L-stick Move
D-pad Weapons
X Action/shoot
A Stealth
C Roll
O Switch target
R Crouch
L Gun mode

tip At the beginning of the level, take the right-hand side of the building – the left-hand side is home to a guard who will alert everyone to your presence.

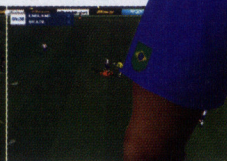
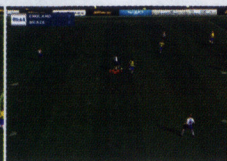
THIS IS FOOTBALL 2003



PUBLISHER: SONY
GAME TYPE: FOOTBALL SIM
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1-8

LAST SEASON'S SONY footie outing is here in a two-and-a-half minute demo which can be played by up to eight players, with the necessary peripherals.

Play as either England or Brazil (a choice that's still just about topical), taking into account the different controls for both defensive and offensive play. Fiddle with the configuration, check out the details – the game itself is a wealth of statistics and player information. We know it's not quite Evo 2 but it still supplies plenty of summer fun. Alternatively, you could go down the park and try out a sliding tackle in dog poo. We'll stick with this thanks.



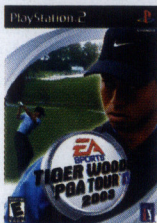
THE CONTROLS

L-stick Move
X Pass/change man
A Through-ball/sliding tackle
O Shoot/block tackle
C Long pass/hook tackle
R Skills
L Deliberate dive/foul
R-stick/Change strategy



tip When faced by a defender, try tapping O to perform various skills that will leave your opponent cross-eyed.

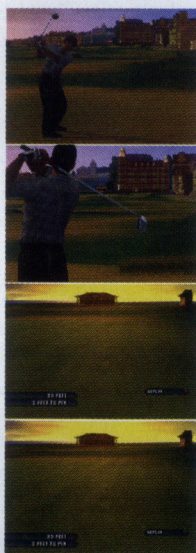
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003



PUBLISHER: EA
GAME TYPE: GOLF SIM
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1
(1-8 FULL GAME)

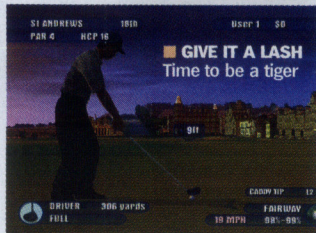
THE KING OF CLUBS straddles the links in the best golf game on PS2. In this demo you can sample four holes, as well as the frantic clubhouse mode.

The most appropriate club will already be selected – just line up the shot, take the wind into consideration and shoot away. Pull back the analogue stick and flick it forward in a straight line at the appropriate speed. Feel the sun on your face and try to ignore the sad disappointment of Mr Woods every time you mess up a shot. It's the best way to hone your game without becoming a member.



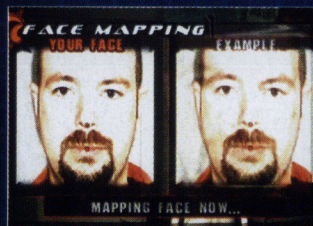
THE CONTROLS

L-stick Swing control
X Change camera view
O Change shot type/replay
C Zoom to target
A Reset targeting mark
R Switch clubs
L Power boost
R Spin control



tip If you want to score and eagle on the 18th at St Andrews you'll find controlled over-spin and the use of the power mode very helpful.

CHECK OUT THESE VIDEOS OF THE HOTTEST NEW PS2 RELEASES...



TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND

Have a look at the video that set E3 alight – the thing that made us want to put the game on the front cover.



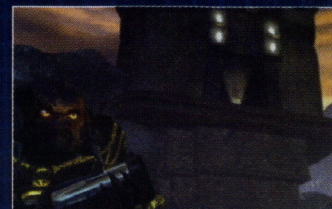
JAK II: RENEGADE

We're getting mighty excited about *Jak II* over here in OPS2 Towers and want you to taste some of the excitement. Head to page 28 to read our preview.



KYA

Little Kya might have some tough competition in the platform stakes this Christmas (see *Jak II*, for instance) but we think she's quirky enough to at least hold her own.



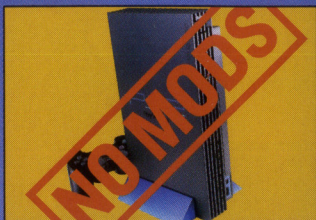
TRIBES AERIAL ASSAULT

We'll review this online-capable FPS next month but you can take a look for yourself with this tasty video.

UNCOVERING THE LATEST PS2 NEWS EVERY MONTH

SPY EDITOR: GEORGE WALTER/SPY CONTRIBUTORS: TIM CLARK, PAUL FITZPATRICK, STEVEN WILLIAMS, STEPHEN PIERCE, RICHARD KEITH, NARAYAN PATTISON, JAMES ELLIS

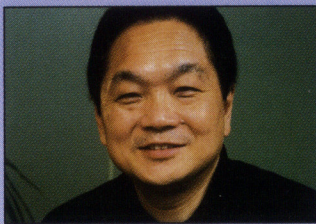
INFO NUDGE



SONY FORCES PIRATES TO WALK PLANK

Understandably unhappy with last year's court case result – making it legal to modify PlayStation consoles – Sony took the decision to the Federal Court. On appeal the Federal Court reversed the decision, meaning that it is now illegal to modify PlayStation consoles. This decision is a major win for Sony in its battle against pirates – who were previously freely able to modify PSones and PS2s to play pirated software. Consumers also benefit from the decision because they will no longer have to foot the bill for the millions of dollars a year that piracy would have cost the market if modifications were allowed to continue.

The court decision could also have big implications for the DVD industry. Currently many DVD players in stores are sold pre-modified to allow consumers to watch DVDs from other regions like America and England. If the illegality of PlayStation modification chips are extended to include DVD player modifications then the ability to play DVD movies from other regions could be lost. One thing's for certain though, the court decision will put an end to shady backyard pirates stealing money from our industry – and that's got to be good!

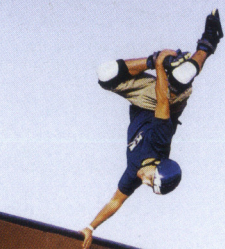


PSP WILL BE CHEAP, SAYS BIG KEN

Presumably to rub great big chunks of the saltiest salt into Nintendo's GBA SP-shaped wounds, Ken Kutaragi revealed that the retail price of the PSP will be relatively low because many of the chips it utilises are already in mass production for use in the PlayStation 2.

ROLLING, ROLLING, ROLLING...

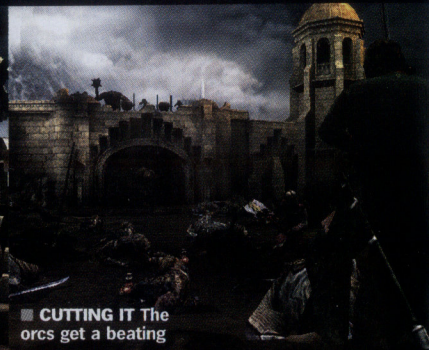
Inline skating game *Rolling* may have been suspended in gaming purgatory after former publisher Rage recently closed its doors, but it's set to return with a new daddy later this year. That daddy is SCI, who has just released a set of new screenshots, despite *Rolling* being almost at review stage when it last disappeared off release schedules. So, *Rolling* is officially back! Yay.



■ **NONE SHALL PASS**
Gandalf uses magical attacks



■ **TROLL WITH IT**
Team up to take out the larger monsters



■ **CUTTING IT** The orcs get a beating

SWORDS

LORDY!

How much better is this! The Return Of The King looks mint. Here's why...

MENAGE A TROIS

The game is split into three story arcs. Frodo and Sam are heading towards the Crack Of Doom (...stop it) to destroy the ring, possibly by melting it into a bling bracelet. Gollum accompanies the short-arses, but sadly you don't get to play as the light-fingered weirdo. Meanwhile, Aragorn, Gimli and Legolas are raising an army of dead pirates while grumpy old Gandalf is travelling on his lonesome. Once you've completed the game you can mix 'n' match characters from the different threads. Quality.

YOU'RE NOT THE BOSS OF ME

EA has given the boss encounters from the last game (some of which were leg-crossingly aggravating) a major rethink. The end-of-level guardians now use more complex attack patterns, but the trick to beating them is better sign-posted. Case in point is the battle with Shelob. To outwit the giant spider-woman the hobbits must use the same technique used in the book.

STOP, COLLABORATE AND LISTEN...

The addition of a co-op mode fixes our biggest criticism of *The Two Towers*. We

played the Southern Gate level as Aragorn and Gimli – racing around firing catapults at the battlements, lopping off orc noggins with gay abandon and finally taking on a troll. The dynamic camera constantly zooms to give you the best view of the battlefield. Many of the levels also feature multiple paths.

COMPLETE CONTROL

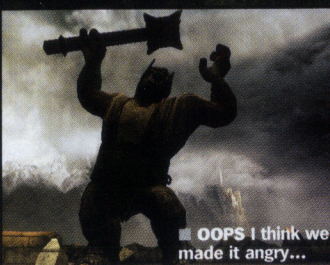
The game's combat engine is having extra depth plumbed-in. First, there's a devastating new charge move that helps prevent you from getting bogged down. Each character is able to purchase 50 different combos as well as additional

items and armour. One promising feature, which hasn't been implemented in the current code, is the ability to use the right analogue stick to direct your attacks. Perfect for big flashy show-offs.

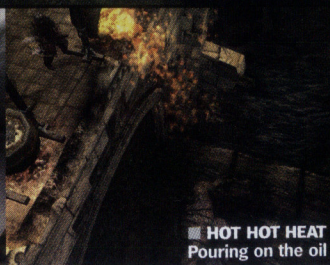
PURE POPCORN

If anything, the seamless transitions between film footage and in-game action look even more impressive. Predictably, the game feels even more cinematic this time – using cutaways, slow-motion, heart-stirring music and inventive sound editing (the way the audio drops out as the Grond batters the gates, for instance) to startling effect. □ TC

■ **SECOND COMING**
They've only Aragorn and done it!



■ **OOPS** I think we made it angry...



■ **HOT HOT HEAT**
Pouring on the oil



■ **HANGING AROUND**
Gandalf leaps into action

This month everyone's been asking...

IS THIS REALLY SONY'S SO-CALLED 'HALO BEATER'?

IT'S THE STUFF of PS2-forum legend. A game that everyone knows the name of but no one's actually seen. The game is popularly being described as a *Halo*-beater, explicitly implying it's better than the popular Xbox FPS. What started, quite innocently, as an off-the-cuff remark has become a by-word for *Killzone* (previously codenamed *Kin*), the apparently groundbreaking online FPS in production via Amsterdam-based development studio Guerilla (previously known as Lost Boys Studio), scheduled for release in spring 2004 and published by Sony.

So why is everyone so damn excited about *Killzone*? Probably because Sony's zero PR has worked in its favour, prompting hyperactive forum rats to incessantly set rumour-mongers into overdrive. Everyone wants to be the first to find a screenshot, even a snippet of information, and gain those valuable forum kudos points.

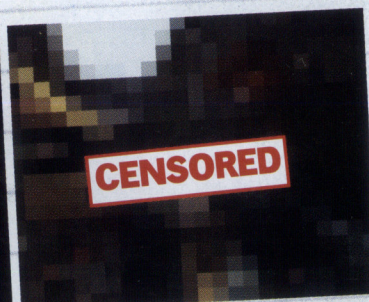
There have been some laughable fakes, a barrage of imagined speculation and, just recently, a leaked 'real' screenshot scanned in from UK mag *PSM2*. One confused Internet hack even went as far as to claim *Killzone* wasn't actually its real

name – merely a way of putting the press off the scent, and instead referred to a special bullet time mode in the game.

We've seen *Killzone* running. That's pretty much all we can say. Oh, and it looks boss. A comparison with any existing PS2 FPS wouldn't do it justice. That was a while ago and sources suggest it now looks even better. Rest assured we'll bring it to you first next month. Ignore those misguided forum entries and remember this: War is coming. ☐ **GW**

Killzone: On the forums

They'll publish anything, these forum jockeys – so if you want to know what you're seeing stick with OPS2 every time...



THE REAL DEAL Don't worry, next month we'll unpixelate it so you can see it properly

WAR IS HELL

HAPPINESS IS A WARM TANK

Like tanks? Like jeeps? Like guns? Like the idea of all of them in an online fragfest? We give you *Hardware*

AS YOU CAN SEE from our exclusive screens, *Hardware Online Arena* is looking very promising. Information's been scarce recently, despite the game's September release date. It's been on the *OPS2* radar for over a year, being one of the hits of E3 2002 for us, and now it's 95% complete with full online tests happening as we type. The emphasis in *Hardware* is still firmly on playability and simplicity, – eg only one pick-up can be held at a time, so there's not even the fiddliness of selecting them. That doesn't mean the effects aren't spectacular though, with the airstrike, for example, reducing everyone outside a bunker to scrap metal.

Vehicle choice is also fittingly brisk. You've got four Jeeps and four tanks, each with primary and secondary weapons and all modelled on real-life Soviet/American 'hardware' (hence the game title). *Hardware*'s control options are also as simple as can be – it's drive/point and shoot, though more complex models with separate aiming are available should you want them.

As for locations, Area 51 is the biggest with room for 16 players, while a further four arenas allow eight-player battles. Expect an Arctic base (modelled heavily on classic 1980s horror *The Thing*), Mayan temple ruins, a lost city deep in the jungle and a quarry. Unsurprisingly, your main objective is as simple as possible – kill or be killed deathmatch-style, although there are team deathmatch and king of the hill modes on offer too. In-game voice communication via the *SOCOM* USB headset should make team fighting simple and spontaneous enough to fit the vibe. ☐ **SW**



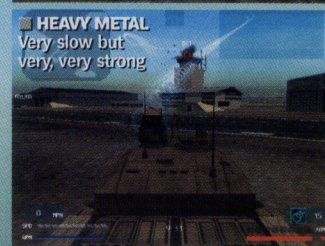
FRAG, YOU'RE IT!
Head online and taste the pain



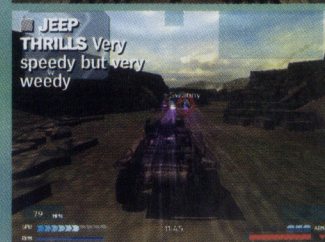
BIG BANG THEORY
Blow stuff up, then gloat via the headset



WAR AND PIECES
Peace through superior firepower? Hell yeah!



HEAVY METAL
Very slow but very, very strong



JEEP THRILLS
Very speedy but very weedy

30 DIFFERENT TYPES OF SNOW!...

...and a freezing flurry of other exclusive SSX3: Out Of Bounds facts

IT'S OFFICIAL! SSX3 has 30 different types of snow (compared to SSX Tricky's five.) Which might sound a bit dull but that means SSX3 will look and play far more realistically than ever before. As well as varying consistencies and depths, the snow will reflect light in a realistic manner and even blow in the wind.

Don't care about snow? Just Hoover up all these other new features the EA Big fellas have revealed only to us...

THE NEW STYLE

Big challenge mode will give you 150 unique objectives to complete. We've been shown:

- ❄ A half-pipe challenge. Reach enough air off the vert to smash panes of glass positioned above the pipe.
- ❄ A backcountry challenge that requires you to traverse the virgin slopes without catching more than ten seconds of air.
- ❄ A head-to-head race challenge, signalled with a message on a PDA (all the riders will carry one of these).

Be first to make it past the post and you will unlock the beaten character as a playable 'boarder.

THE 'SLOPE' STYLE MODE

This new section really showcases the scale of SSX3's mountainscape. It's where you'll let your imagination run wild and perform freeform snow damage. Points are awarded for originality and style.

TRICK EVOLUTIONS

The uber meter now has three levels of tricks:

- ❄ Level 1 tricks consist of one foot release and grab tricks.
- ❄ Level 2 introduces more outrageous flips and spins.
- ❄ Level 3 tricks are now known as Monster tricks. They outdo even the uber tricks found in SSX Tricky's roster.

SSX3 will introduce uber tricks that are specifically designed for use on rails. In Tricky uber tricks

were performed in midair.

If you combine the above with the new board flex link trick (think Tony Hawk's-style manual rolls) you could effectively string together tricks in a continuous combo from the top to the bottom of the slopes.

CASH MONEY

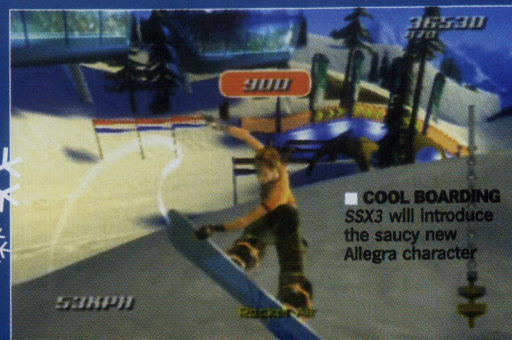
The SSX team has hinted at a new money system incorporated into the game that could be earned and then used to buy things like clothes, boards – even new music.

ONLINE PLAY

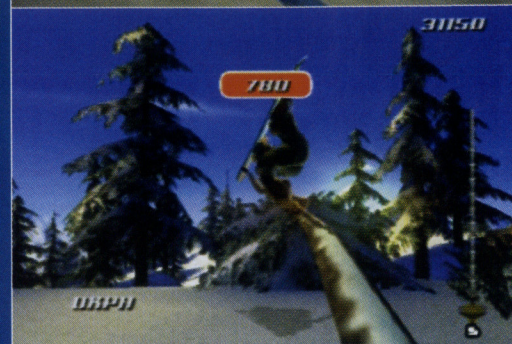
Despite much pleading, EA has decided not to include the head-to-head online racing that will feature in the US version of the game. Bah.

SLOPE SOUNDS

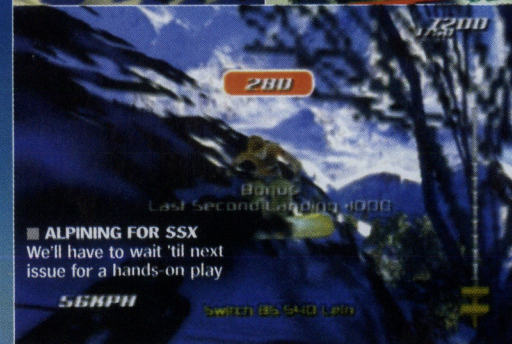
SSX Tricky had Run DMC's *It's Tricky* blasting out every time you hit the uber level – SSX3 will feature even more big-name artists. Typically the theme is loud, rockin' and hip-hopular. There's X-Ecutioners, Felix Da Housecat, Queens Of The Stone Age, NERD, Chemical Bros and Red Hot Chili Peppers for starters. ☐ GW



■ **COOL BOARDING** SSX3 will introduce the saucy new Allegra character



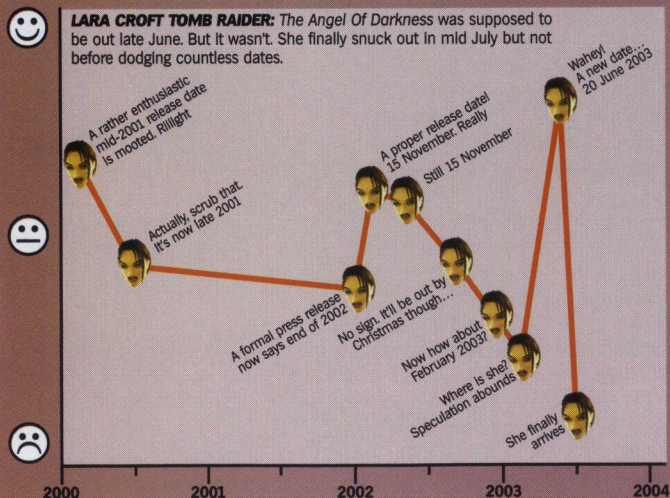
■ **NOT SO TRICKY** We got EA to take some exclusive in-game shots for us – shame they were rubbish at playing the game...



■ **ALPINING FOR SSX** We'll have to wait 'til next issue for a hands-on play

THE LARA CROFT DISAPPOINT-O-METER

Ever wondered how many times has Lara stood us up?



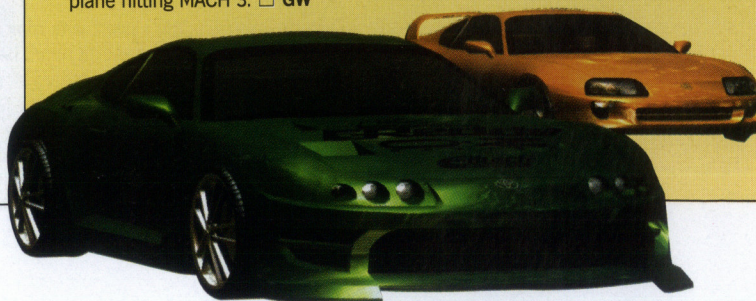
WHY WE'RE FEELING THE NEED

Six reasons why we loved the Need For Speed: Underground trailer...

1. Need For Speed has gone all *Fast And Furious* (the first one, of course). And hence, *Underground*.
2. The main car has those purple neon lights under the chassis. We so want them on our cars...
3. There are attractive lady drivers. Natch.
4. The car has one of those NOS turbo charges in the back – in-game this will act as your boost.
5. The bit where the car majestically leaps over a river – they have to include stunts like that in the game.
6. The boost effect. Everything goes into a massive sparkling technicolour blur around the car, like a plane hitting MACH 3. ☐ GW

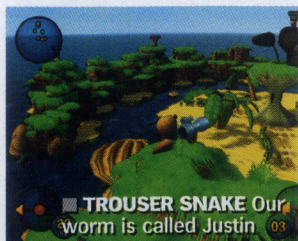


■ **MIDNIGHT CAR BOY** Next issue, we'll have an in-depth look at NFS: Underground



A NEW CAN OF WORMS

Worms 3D finally arrives and it's a mud-munching marvel



■ **TROUSER SNAKE** Our worm is called Justin



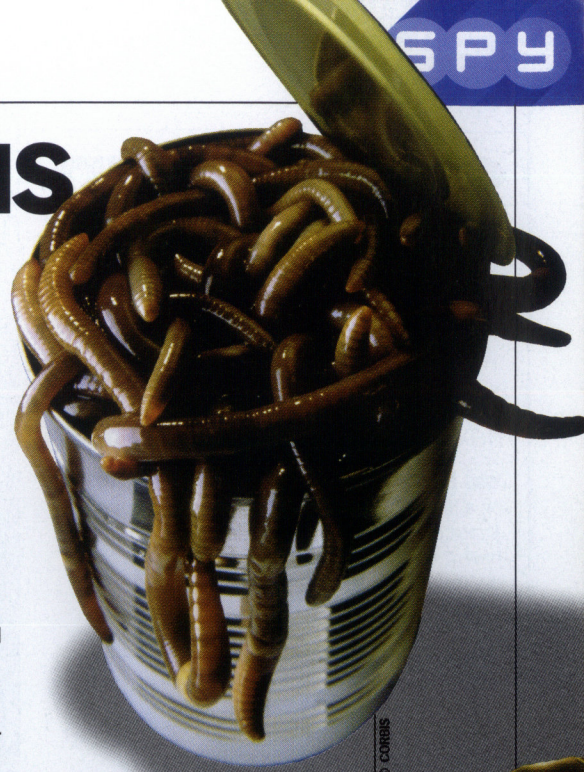
■ **LEGLESS** But still rock hard

REST EASY, THE good news is that the Worms FPS is currently as far away from development as is humanly possible. The even better news is that a fully revamped Worms for PS2 is nearly here.

The mere mention of Worms 3D provokes a universal reaction around the watercooler here at OPS2 central. "How are they going to do that then?" Team17 has brought the chaotic intervertebrate combat on leaps and bounds from its two-dimensional roots – which devotees will explain as an insanely addictive turn-based multiplayer strategy battle game. With worms, obviously. Worms 3D has gone right back to the drawing board with a new 3D (duh) engine and yet been

careful not to upset the fans who would crucify anything that wasn't to their tastes. Team17 even had regular forum visitors in to test the game during its development to ensure it was on the right track.

The levels we saw were mostly islands, some with amusing movie pastiches and others more recognisable from the PSone series. It's all fully destructible, as you'd expect, and combat remains more luck than skill, but the possibilities added by the 3D landscape have led to some nice touches – jet packs, changeable weather, randomly generated missions and absolutely everything you'd hope to find in your oh-so-amusing arsenal. □ MW



© CORBIS

Curses! I just messed up that jump. Time to...

...REWIND AND TRY AGAIN

Manipulating time with The Fresh Prince Of Persia

LIKE WE SAID LAST MONTH, Spy never expected this to be good. Remakes of so-called 'classic' videogames haven't exactly lived up to expectations on PS2 – Defender? Gauntlet? Pac-Man World? Were we actually better off for them being made?

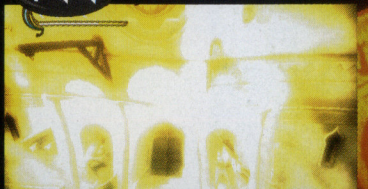
Probably not. Prince Of Persia however, is about to change things by introducing a brand new game mechanic that makes bullet time look positively ancient. In this sand-encrusted action adventure the concept of time travel is introduced as a tenet of the gameplay. After collecting the Sands Of Time from slayed enemies the Prince can use them to slow down time, fast forward it or – and here's the clever bit – rewind time.

Clever PR wibble? Apparently not. Having seen POP in full-flow recently we had the chance to try out these time travel moves – and they really work. Imagine this: you're swinging gracefully over a bottomless chasm, somersaulting from carefully placed poles and bounding spike-filled pits. Suddenly your thumb slips and the Prince plummets towards certain death, but somehow you manage to hit rewind and the game goes into reverse. The accompanying effect – glowing, over-exposed colours and backwards music – is gorgeous, but can't compare to the

sweet sense of relief as the Prince is delivered back to safety. In the same breath you utter, "Why the hell hasn't someone thought of doing this before on PS2?" Fast-forwarding is equally inventive, enabling you to see into the near future, while slow-motion, well, you know how that works already. Here's a visual taster of what to expect... □ GW

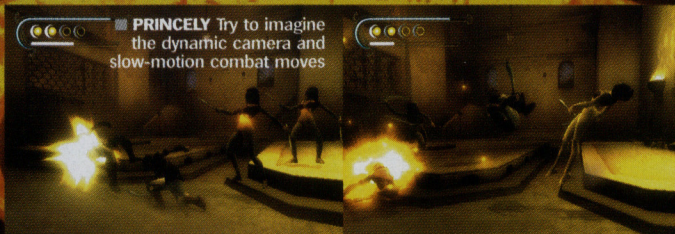


REWIND



■ **SORRY** The 'rewind' moves too fast to properly capture it on the page

SLOW-MOTION



■ **PRINCELY** Try to imagine the dynamic camera and slow-motion combat moves

FAST FORWARD



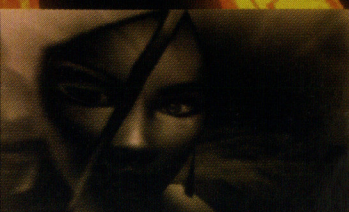
■ **QUANTUM LEAP** After completing a section, the Prince goes into a trance



■ **FORESIGHT** This warns him of upcoming obstacles...



■ **INSIGHT** ...objects or weapons he needs to keep an eye out for...



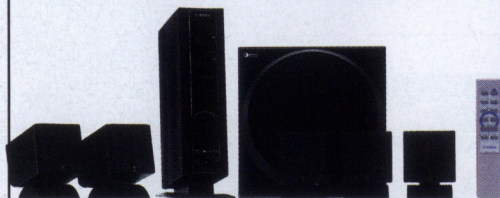
■ **GIRL SIGHT** ...and people he's likely to meet and interact with

SURROUND SOUND ON THE GO

Take your PS2 gaming to the next level with the TS10

YOU MIGHT THINK that your PS2 sounds pretty cool on a regular TV, but until you've heard the cars in *V8 Supercars* roar so loud your room shakes, you haven't had the full experience. *OPS2* recently took the small but mighty TS10 surround sound setup for a test drive and came away mighty impressed.

The sleek unit consists of a slim, vertical standing amplifier and six speakers including a centre speaker and subwoofer. The TS10 features excellent sound quality, Dolby Digital/Dolby Pro Logic II/DTS compatibility, two optical digital inputs, YST subwoofer, remote control and a slick vertical design. **NP**



WHAT A PLANK Erecting a makeshift barrier is much more effective. Here Cindy bolts some wooden boards over the door. How long they hold is another matter

DAY OF THE DEAD

New Resident Evil Outbreak details unearthed

SURROUNDED BY SHAMBLING CORPSES, one of the team has just been hauled screaming through a window, someone else is crawling around on the floor and we're down to our last couple of bullets. The end is surely nigh and yet everyone seems to be giggling...

The really surprising thing about playing *Resident Evil Outbreak* is what a laugh riot the game is. With only a handful of items to share between players, it isn't long before the squabbling starts. Confusion rules as the

zombies start breaking down the doors and all hell breaks loose. The ensuing chaos sees players shouting orders, crying for help and apportioning blame. Which pretty much captures the city-under-siege vibe perfectly.

Whether the black comedy will be quite so evident when the other players aren't in the room remains to be seen. We recently unearthed a stinking new batch of screens from *Outbreak* which illustrate some of the new gameplay elements to terrifying effect. **SW**



TIME FOR BED Hard to believe Capcom hasn't thought of this one before. As a last resort your character can hide under the bed – also perfect for jumping out and terrorising nervy teammates



HOLLYWOOD GOES TO HELL

OPS2 takes a look at how the Devil May Cry movie might pan out

PRE-PRODUCTION

Devil May Cry is a huge franchise on PS2, with the original recently going Platinum. Fans will be excited to hear that the movie rights to the franchise have since been snapped up. This doesn't necessarily mean that the film will actually get finished, but it shows somebody's interested.

BLOCKBUSTER?

How could *DMC* entice moviegoers? With its style, is the obvious answer. The mere sight of Dante slashing enemies into the air with a six foot sword before giving them some Swiss-cheese treatment would get butts in the seats. Adding in some scenes of Dante's transformation into his demonic self would make for compelling viewing, and setting it in a haunted mansion or town would appeal to action and horror fans.

BOMB?

The problem is that *DMC* is basically a game based on a movie anyway. Dante is little more than a white version of Blade. With two *Blade* films already out there – both offering the action orientated mix of guns, swordplay and dealing out oblivion to undead ghouls – Dante could have a hard time standing out from the crowd.

OPS2 SUGGESTS

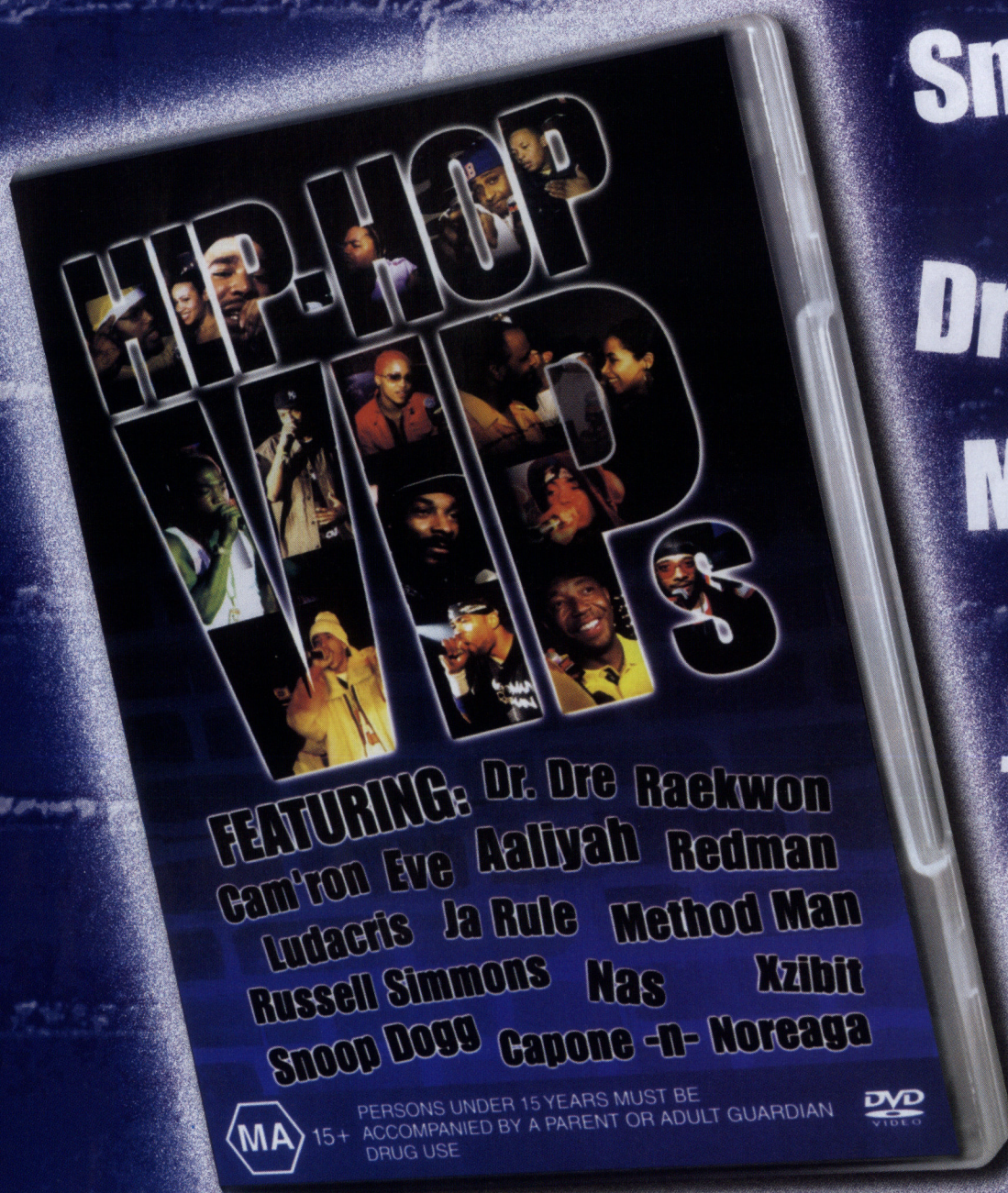
Blade went all action. *DMC* needs to differentiate itself by blending in elements of the horror and adventure genres. The story would then hopefully be less predictable, giving rise to more memorable action scenes. **JE**



STILL THE ONE
Is Blade past his prime?



THE PRETENDER
Can Dante outdo Blade?



**Snoop
Dogg**

Dr. Dre

**Method
Man**

Ja Rule

Xzibit

FEATURING: Dr. Dre Raekwon
Cam'ron Eve Aaliyah Redman
Ludacris Ja Rule Method Man
Russell Simmons Nas Xzibit
Snoop Dogg Capone -n- Noreaga



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DRUG USE



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SPY INCOMING

PS2 RELEASE SCHEDULE



AUGUST

AFL Live 2004	Sports	Acclaim
ATV: Off Road Fury 2	Racing	THQ
Allens Vs Predator	FPS	EA
Dancing Stage Mega Mix	Dancing	Atari
Dead To Rights	Action	EA
Finding Nemo	Action	THQ
Formula One 2003	Racing	Sony
Futurama	Adventure	Atari
Gladius	Strategy	EA
Great Escape, The	Action/adventure	Atari
Indiana Jones and the Emporer's Tomb	Adventure	EA
Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter	FPS	Vivendi
Run Like Hell	Adventure	Vivendi
XGRA	Racing	Acclaim

SEPTEMBER

Alter Echo	Action	THQ
Amplitude: Frequency 2	Rhythm action	Sony
Backyard Wrestling	Wrestling	Atari
Colin McRae Rally 4	Racing	Atari
Dark Chronicle	RPG	Sony
Destruction Derby Arena	Driving	Sony
Disney's Extreme Skate Adventure	Sports	Activision
Fire Warrior	FPS	THQ
Freaky Flyers	Action	Acclaim
Freestyle MX	Racing	Acclaim
Freedom: Soldiers of Liberty	Action/adventure	EA
Frogger Beyond	Action	Atari
Hardware Online	Online	Sony
Italian Job, The	Racing	Atari
Judge Dredd	Action	Vivendi
Madden NFL 2004	Sports	EA
NHL 2004	Sports	EA
Reel Fishing 3	Sports	Ubi Soft
Rugby 2004	Sports	EA
Soul Calibur II	Fighter	EA
Tribes 2: Aerial Assault	FPS	Vivendi
Unlimited Saga	RPG	Atari
Urban Freestyle Soccer	Sports	Acclaim
Yugioh	Action/adventure	Atari
Zone of the Enders 2	Action	Atari

OCTOBER

Alias	Adventure	Acclaim
Asterix & Obelix	Adventure	Atari
Battlestar Galactica	RTS	Vivendi
Buffy the Vampire Slayer 2	Action	Vivendi
Club Football	Football sim	Atari
Conflict Desert Storm 2	Action	Atari
Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon	Beat-'em-up	Ubi Soft
Dog's Life	Adventure	Sony
EverQuest Online Adventures	Online RPG	Sony
FIFA 2004	Sports	EA
Ghost Hunter	Adventure	Sony
Ghostmaster	Adventure	Vivendi
Gladiator	Beat-'em-up	Acclaim
Harry Potter Quidditch	Sports	EA
Hobbit, The	Action	Vivendi
Hunter the Reckoning: Wayward	Action	Vivendi
Jak II: Renegade	Action	Sony

PS2 RELEASE SCHEDULE



Kya Dark Lineage	Action	Atari
My Street	Party game	Sony
Simpsons: Hit & Run, The	Adventure	Vivendi
SplashDown: Rides Gone Wild	Racing	THQ
This Is Soccer 2004	Sports	Sony
Worms 3D	Strategy	Atari
XIII	FPS	Ubi Soft

NOVEMBER

Batman: Rise of Sin Tzu	Action	Ubi Soft
Beyond Good and Evil	RPG	Ubi Soft
Bond: Everything or Nothing	Action	EA
Dancing Stage Fever	Dancing	Atari
Dragon Ball Z Salyan Smash	Action	Atari
Eye Toy 2	Party game	Sony
Lord of the Rings: Return of the King	Action	EA
Medal of Honor: Rising Sun	FPS	EA
Mission Impossible: Operation Surma	Shooter	Atari
NBA Jam 2004	Sports	Acclaim
Need for Speed Underground	Racing	EA
NHL Hitz Pro	Sports	Acclaim
Prince of Persia	Action	Ubi Soft
Ratchet & Clank 2	Action	Sony
Road Kill	Action	Acclaim
Spy Hunter 2	Action	Acclaim
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	Action	Atari
Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines	Shooter	Atari
Time Crisis 3	Shooter	Sony
True Crime: Streets of LA	Driving/action	Activision
WRC 3	Racing	Sony
X-Files: Resist or Serve, The	Adventure	Vivendi

DECEMBER

Final Fantasy X-2	RPG	Sony
Gran Turismo 4	Racing	Sony
Legacy of Kain: Defiance	Action	Atari
Rise To Honor	Action	Sony
Tony Hawk's Underground	Sports	Activision
Whiplash	Platformer	Atari
2004		
Bloody Roar 4	Fighter	Atari
Broken Sword: The Sleeping Dragon	Adventure	Atari
Celebrity Deathmatch	Beat-'em-up	Take 2
Cy Girls	Action	Atari
Driver 3	Driving/action	Atari
Fear Effect: Inferno	Adventure	Atari
Mafia	Action/adventure	Take 2
Manhunt	Adventure	Take 2
MTX: MotoTrax featuring Travis Pastrana	Racing	Activision
Nightmare Creatures 3	Action	Ubi Soft
Pitfall Harry	Action	Activision
Pro Evolution 3	Football sim	Atari
Red Dead Revolver	Action	THQ
Resident Evil Outbreak	Online adventure	THQ
Reservoir Dogs	Action	Atari
SOCOM 2	Shooter	Sony
Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow	Shooter	Ubi Soft
Spider-Man 2	Action	Activision
Starcraft: Ghost	Action	Vivendi
Syphon Filter: Omega Strain	Action	Sony
Tak and the Power of Juju	Platformer	THQ

TOP 40 GAMES CHART

RANK	TITLE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER
1	Enter The Matrix	Adventure	Atari
2	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	Adventure	Take 2
3	Lord Of The Rings: The Two Towers	Action	EA
4	Dynasty Warriors 4	Action	THQ
5	Midnight Club 2	Racing	Take 2
6	The Hulk	Action	Vivendi
7	Harry Potter: Chamber Of Secrets	Adventure	EA
8	Return to Castle Wolfenstein	Action	Activision
9	Devil May Cry 2	Action	THQ
10	Rayman 3 Hoodlum Havoc	Adventure	Ubi Soft
11	Red Faction 2	Action	THQ
12	Wakeboarding Unleashed	Sports	Activision
13	Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell	Action	Ubi Soft
14	Virtua Tennis 2	Sports	Acclaim
15	The Sims	Strategy	EA
16	Def Jam Vendetta	Sports	EA
17	Monopoly Party	Family	THQ
18	The Getaway	Adventure	Sony
19	Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit 2	Racing	EA
20	Bond 007: Nightfire	Action	EA
21	Minority Report	Action	Activision
22	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	Action	EA
23	Medal Of Honor: Frontline	Action	EA
24	AFL Live 2003	Sports	Acclaim
25	Tiger Woods PGA USA Tour 2003	Sports	EA
26	Silent Hill 3	Adventure	Atari
27	Spyro: Enter The Dragonfly	Adventure	Vivendi
28	Auto Modellista	Racing	THQ
29	Conflict Desert Storm	Action	Atari
30	Moto GP 3	Racing	Sony
31	FIFA 2003	Sports	EA
32	Hitman 2	Action	Atari
33	WWE SmackDown 4	Sports	THQ
34	Shinobi	Adventure	Sony
35	Dragonball Z: Budokai Fighters	Action	Atari
36	Onimusha 2	Adventure	THQ
37	Ratchet & Clank	Action	Sony
38	Grand Prix Challenge	Racing	Atari
39	Kingdom Hearts	Adventure	Sony
40	NBA Street 2	Sports	EA

MUSIC 3000



Get Ready All You Aspiring Music Superstars...

...for life at the top of the charts as MUSIC 3000 has arrived. Music creation has never been so much fun and yet so simple; you will be creating high quality music tracks with stunning videos within minutes

It's A Recording Studio on A Disc!

Remix chart topping artists such as Paul Oakenfold, Tim Maas & Kelis, Doves, PPK, NU, 3rd Edge, Gerling & Kylie
16,000 instrument sound samples let you create any style of music, including Pop, Trance, Hip-Hop, Garage, Indie, and Nu Metal
20 music studio effects including Chorus, Reverb, Filters, Time Stretching and Reverse
64 audio mixing channels

IF You Need More, Just Plug In A USB Sampler!

Record vocals or sounds for use in your own tracks
Using the incredible V2M technology you can just sing a tune and MUSIC 3000 plays back the notes as the instrument of your choice!

Produce Music Videos Tool

Add stunning visuals with the Multi Track Video Generator
With an extensive library of over 1,300 unique video-clips and images, you can mix and blend amazing realtime effects or let MUSIC 3000 do it for you

Maybe You Just Want To Have some Fun!

Aspiring DJs get their chance to mix phat beats with up to six virtual decks



Coming Soon for Music 3000

USB Sampler for your Playstation 2

Give your music the edge, sample sounds from any source directly into Music 3000.

Budding pop stars add your own vocals via a microphone. The USB Sampler also allows you to use the incredible V2M (Voice 2 Music) technology built into Music 3000. Hum or whistle a tune and Music 3000 plays back the notes as the instrument of your choice.



Fantastic Stills



Funky Real Life Images



Easy to Create Videos



Live Club Footage



Cool 3D Effects



Two Player DJ Super Mixer



Fantastic Video Editor



V2M (Voice to Music) Feature



Awesome Instrument Editor



Easy To Use Track Editor

monitor

MONITOR CONTRIBUTORS: ANTHONY O'CONNOR, NARAYAN PATTISON, PAUL FREW

Previewing the new games you voted to read about!

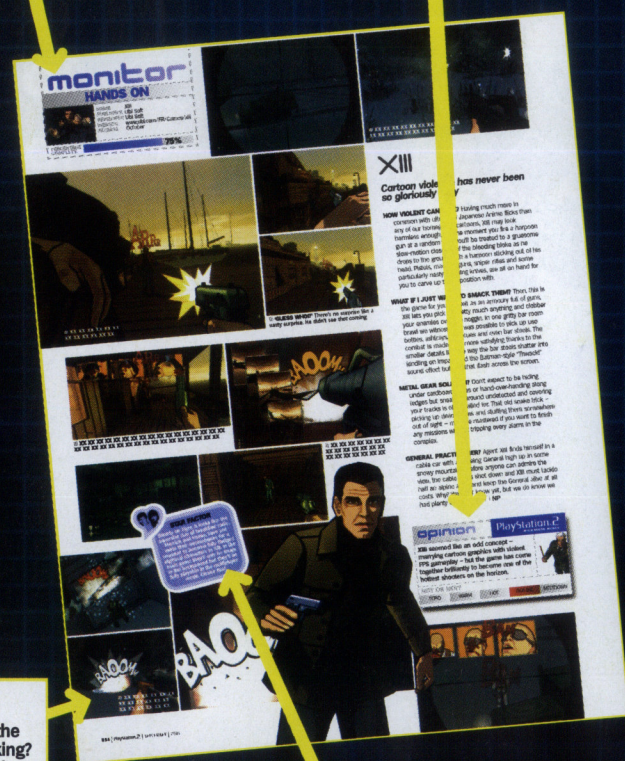
WELCOME TO MONITOR!

SO WHAT'S ALL THIS THEN? Our pledge is to keep all the big games under constant surveillance, as directed by you! Whenever a cool new game bleeps loud on your radar, write to us – we'll dig up exclusive new screens, information and interviews with the creators, or bring you first impressions from playable code.

HOW DO I GET INVOLVED? To vote in our Most Wanted charts email us on OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au and we'll also look for comments from the official forums at au.playstation.com. Get voting now!

INFO BOX It's here you'll find out who makes a game, how complete it is, when it's due to hit the stores and if there's any more information online.

OPINION BOX What do we think of it so far? We reveal our thoughts and also include what you'd like to see in the game – visit the forums at au.playstation.com to get involved.



LATEST SCREENS
So how's the game looking? We show the hits of the future in all their visual splendour.

INFO BURSTS Keep an eye out for these blobs, where we'll drop in facts, rants, quotations, devil's advocate opinions and anything extra you should know.

MOST WANTED

Which upcoming games do you want to see more of? Email or write to us and we'll uncover the latest details on your future favourites!

POSITION	GAME	WHAT?
1	TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA A detective with a grudge. And guns. And a penchant for 'commandeering' cars.	NEW SCREENS AND INFO PAGE 22 EXCLUSIVE!
2	RUGBY 2004 'More of everything' is the clear theme behind this year's Rugby!	HANDS-ON PAGE 24 EXCLUSIVE!
3	THE GREAT ESCAPE It fully respects the much-loved movie classic. And it's from the guys behind Conflict: Desert Storm – that can't hurt.	HANDS-ON PAGE 26 EXCLUSIVE!
4	JAK II: RENEGADE The epic adventure of a boy and his weasel comes of age!	HANDS-ON PAGE 28 EXCLUSIVE!
5	CONFLICT: DESERT STORM II The bad boys of desert warfare are heading back to Baghdad.	HANDS-ON PAGE 30 EXCLUSIVE!

ALSO IN monitor THIS MONTH

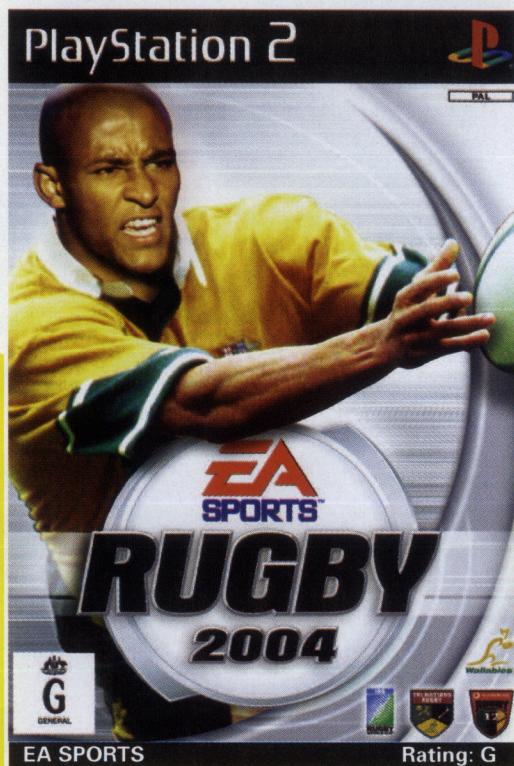
DOG'S LIFE	PAGE 31
HUNTER THE RECKONING: WAYWARD	PAGE 32
DESTRUCTION DERBY ARENA	PAGE 33
XIII	PAGE 34
AMPLITUDE	PAGE 35
BACKYARD WRESTLING: DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME	PAGE 36



Which forthcoming games would you like to see in Monitor next month? Visit the forums at au.playstation.com, email us at OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au (remember to put 'Monitor' in the subject line) or write by post to Monitor, Official PlayStation 2 Magazine, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 2002. Vote now!

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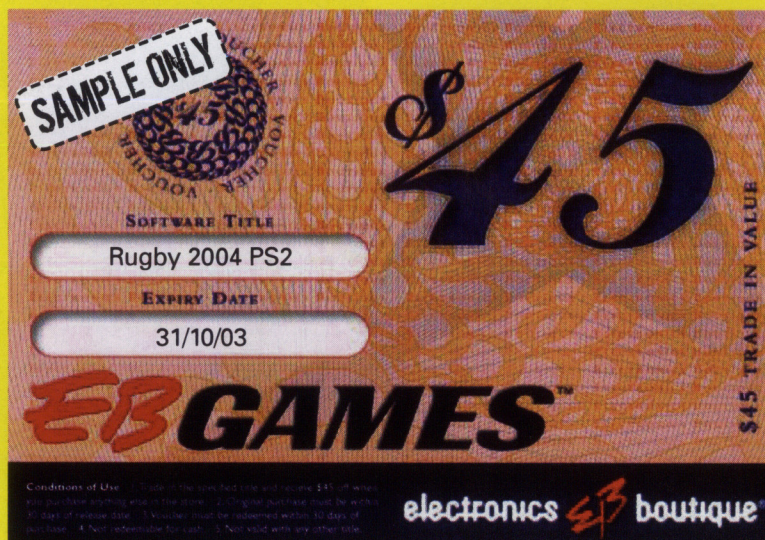
SEPTEMBER PREMIUM TRADE-IN TITLE



OCTOBER PREMIUM TRADE-IN TITLE

SAVE \$45

ON THE HOTTEST GAMES EVERY MONTH!



HERE'S HOW

Every month the hottest games on PS2/XB/GC will be selected for our **Premium Trade-in Promotion**. That means the hottest games every month are worth \$45 when you trade them in with us.

Example

- > Buy Rugby 2004 PS2 in September. **Go home, play it out!**
- > Trade-in Rugby 2004 for Soul Calibur in October.
- > Soul Calibur = just \$55! **Go home, play it out!**
- > Trade-in Soul Calibur for Tony Hawk Underground in November.
- > Tony Hawk Underground = just \$55! **Go home, play it out!**

Titles are examples only and may vary due to release date. See store staff for details. Some conditions apply.

FOR YOUR NEAREST **EB GAMES™** STORE CONTACT (07) 3860 7777

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TRUE CRIME

NAME True Crime: Streets Of LA
PUBLISHER Activision
DEVELOPER Activision
WEBSITE www.truecirmela.com
LAST SEEN OPS2#16

PERCENTAGE
COMPLETE

75%

RELEASE
DATE
NOVEMBER

TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA

A detective with a grudge. And guns. And a penchant for 'commandeering' cars. Uh oh...

IS THIS TRUE? What? Sorry, I was eating a doughnut.

CRIME. Oh. No. But the LA streets do exist, although not inside a PS2, at least not tangibly... and how exciting this looks. On paper it's one of the most promising titles around, perhaps the only thing with the scope to rival the (so far) all-conquering *Grand Theft Auto* series. And it certainly owes a debt to it.

ARE YOU SAYING IT'S AN ALMOST EXACT COPY?

Yes, but the encouraging thing is that it's bigger – allegedly – and better. The city's square mileage is quoted at between 250-400 and while we don't believe it's quite that big, it's clearly massive. Nick Kang drives fast, fires weapons and engages in fistcuffs but, again, the experience is a few notches above *GTA* – for instance, that's clearly a Ferrari F50 over there, not a pastiche of an old American car we've never heard of. We can do more damage with a Ferrari.

JAM'S OOZING FROM YOUR DOUGHNUT.

Thanks. Rather than just having more weapons than Tommy Vercetti, Kang has more unarmed moves, including stealth attacks, grapples and all manner of punch-kick combos in a full-on, kung-fu style. He's so street. When he's packing he can also target multiple enemies and make *Matrix/Max Payne*-style slo-mo dives. And as a cop out to break the grip of the Russian mafia and Chinese Triads in LA, there's no moral problem blowing people away. Beware of killing witnesses and informants. Wasting key characters or letting them die can hobble your investigation as vital info will be lost.

NICE TRY, BUT GTA HAD TONS OF EXTRA MISSIONS.

True Crime is the same. Extra missions appear on your in-car radio – wildly different to appearing on a pager. There are around 100 of these, and while they're 'sub-missions' they could still affect the outcome of the overall story, told in the 20 branching main missions.

CRIMEY. SO YOU'RE EXCITED, THEN?

See this wet patch? It ain't jam. ☐ SW

opinion

PlayStation 2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA

TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA might well be rather derivative but if it can actually deliver the kind of verve it's promising right now, we won't hold that against it.



HOT OR NOT?

TEPID

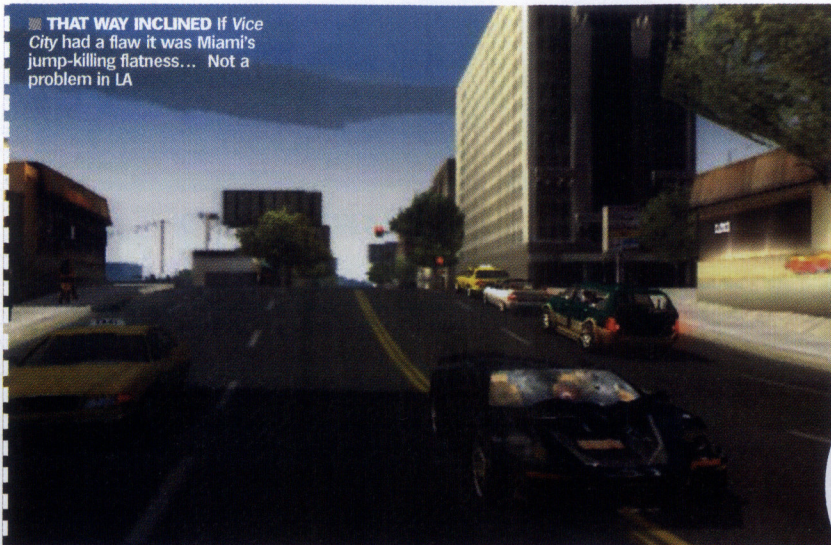
WARM

HOT

BOILING

MELTDOWN

■ **THAT WAY INCLINED** If *Vice* City had a flaw it was Miami's jump-killing flatness... Not a problem in LA



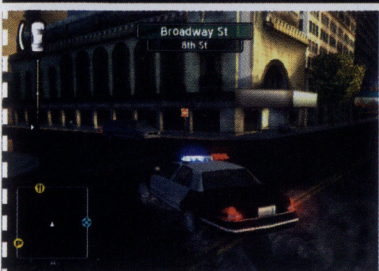
■ **LOOKS FAMILIAR**
Clearly a Ferrari F50. And below, a Honda S2000



HUGE CHOONS!

A separately available album? Where did they get that idea? It's a mix of new stuff and classics from the likes of Ice Cube, Coolio, EZ E Jr, Mac 10, KAM and 187. Why are none of them just called John?

■ **SOUNDS FAMILIAR**
Many voices are by major Hollywood types



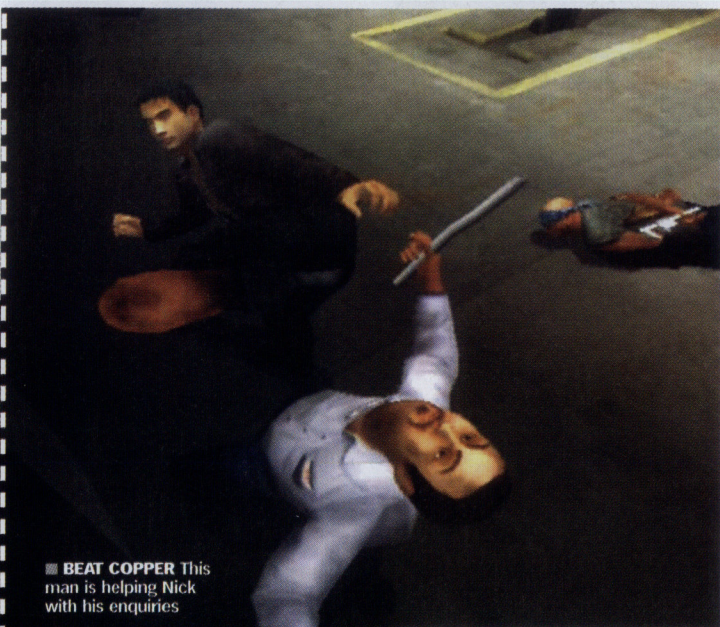
■ **SQUEALING PIG** Despite the carnage, you're actually upholding The Law. Really



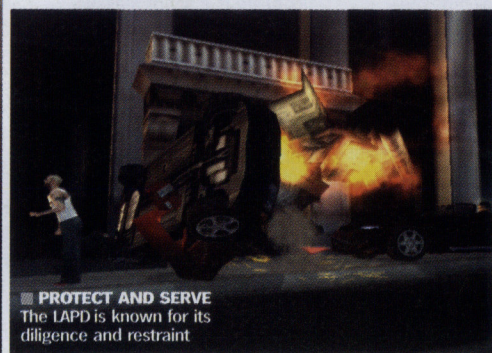
■ **STILL ANGRY** Loads of weapons and a range of kung-fu moves make walking fun, too



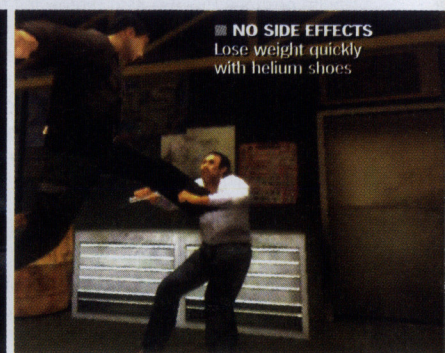
■ **OFF THE MENU** Nick left the waiters a tip. It was 'run away quickly'



■ **BEAT COPPER** This man is helping Nick with his enquiries



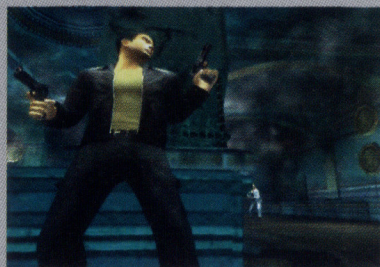
■ **PROTECT AND SERVE**
The LAPD is known for its diligence and restraint



■ **NO SIDE EFFECTS**
Lose weight quickly with helium shoes

AND... ACTION!

You can't deny it, *True Crime*'s a lot more filmic than its obvious inspiration



The camera slices around to showcase Nick's moves – very Hollywood. Note how detailed the interiors are. Yummy.



Always impressive in the films, the horizontal explosion from a glass office finally makes it into games – sounds of general excitement!



Halfway into a chase and you've crashed the Ferrari. Twin revolvers cocked, there's nothing left but a desperate shot as the crim screeches away. Die!



Money makes the world go round and Nick makes the money whirl round. What's this if it's not symbolic? Deadly hip.



NAME Rugby 2004
PUBLISHER EA
DEVELOPER HB Studios
WEBSITE www.easportsrugby.com
RELEASE October

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

70%



RUGBY 2004

'More of everything' is the clear theme behind this year's Rugby!

THE YEAR OF THE WALLABY? Well their latest results would suggest otherwise, but 2003 may still be the year that rugby bursts into Australia's mainstream. Come October, not only will the World Cup be dominating sport reports, but EA's *Rugby 2004* will burst onto the PS2 like Kefu rampaging towards the try-line. Indeed, this Spring is looking white hot for rugby enthusiasts. Following on from the successful *Rugby 2002*, HB Studios looks set to bring an all new level of realism to the fledgling franchise; with 95 teams, 75 accurately reproduced stadiums, 10 play modes and the 'no-guts, no-glory' attitude that saw the Wallabies bring home the bacon in '99.

IS THE AI MORE HALFBACK, LESS FORWARD? One of the major grievances fans had with the 2002 title was the failure of defending players to use any intelligence. In gaming-horror, players would witness the tough as nails Australian backline retreat over the dead ball line rather than tackle a limping, maimed and asthmatic Japanese forward stumbling in their general direction. HB Studios addressed this situation by supplying each character with its own AI, meaning that individuals will react to the play rather than to pre-set thinking. We saw this feature in play when a strong defence was able to repel wave after wave of attacks right on their try-line.

PLENTY OF GOOD OLD RUNNING RUGBY THEN?

The key to accurately simulating rugby is to make sure that the free-flowing gameplay is never held back by physics nuances or poorly controlled rucks. This aspect is still very much a work in progress, but the addition of a side-step button and cut-out passes already go a long way to improving on its predecessor. *Rugby 2004* will take a *Madden*-styled approach to set plays, allowing specific strategies to be selected and worked towards. However, given the defensive

response to the plan, gamers will still be able to instigate plays on the run. As for the rucks, gone is the frustrating power bar and in its place is a set of realistic physics based on pack weight. Listen carefully and you should be able to hear a collective sigh from PS2 controllers and thumbs throughout Australia.

JUST AN IMPROVED VERSION OF THE ORIGINAL?

Not quite, as HB has packed more than enough into its kit-bag to justify coming onto the field again. A player management system will be introduced where gamers can create up to 90 unique players and build up their skills and experience until they can fly like butterflies and sting like bees. Yes, you can create a team of lurking, fired-up Lomu's to grind the faces of all pretenders into the hallowed turf of Stadium Australia. With EA's typically swish presentation guiding you through the single, 2-4 player or co-op modes, you can expect some familiar vocals in the form of Channel 7's Gordon Bray. **SW**

opinion

PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA

RUGBY 2004 could well be the must-own sports sim of 2003, but the jury is still out on whether HB Studios can create a smooth running physics engine without sacrificing realism.

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID

WARM

HOT

BOILING

MELTDOWN



■ **TASTES SCRUMMY** Scrum dynamics have improved



■ **FLYING HIGH** Get a helping hand from team-mates



HI MUM!



Although most rugby players have a melon only a mother could love, HB has seen fit to motion capture their facial landmarks and digitise them in the game. We can expect the dimensions, feel and attributes of each player to back up the real deal. And what about the chance of setting up a bit of biff between Gregan and Lomu? Not too good, unfortunately. A bit of fisticuffs may be the reality of the real sport, but we won't be seeing it in *Rugby 2004*. The same goes for harsh sledging, eye-gouging, head-stomping and that old crowd favourite, the coat-hanger.



■ **TOUCHED UP** Scoring won't be as easy this time around

GETTING THE BOOT STUCK IN



HB Studios has toiled away to get every element of its ball kicking up to scratch. Grubbers, Punts and the Up and Under (or Bomb) are all present and work to full effect. *Rugby 2002* suffered from giving these kicks too much attacking emphasis (especially with the Up and Under) and not providing defensive physics to counter them. Thanks to the new AI these gameplay elements now work much better.

■ **FIGHT CLUB** If only we could have seen some more brutal tackles



monitor

HANDS ON

THE GREAT ESCAPE

NAME The Great Escape
PUBLISHER Atari
DEVELOPER SCI
WEBSITE www.pivotalgames.com
LAST SEEN OPS2#16

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

90%

RELEASE DATE AUGUST

■ **GOON SNOW**
MacDonald's got a good disguise

■ **DOOR STOP**
Cover's blown, time to get busy

■ **HILTS'S TRIP** No guards but watch out for the searchlights

■ **CRAWL OR NOTHING** Cutting the wire is one thing. Getting Blythe to follow is another

THE GREAT ESCAPE

Achtung Tommy! For you the wait is (nearly) over...

IT'S A CRACKING MOVIE BUT JUST HOW EXCITING A GAME WILL THE GREAT ESCAPE MAKE? That's a

good point, but your fears of a one-trick pony, POW-style stealth-athon are misplaced. While the central section of the game famously depicts the film's mass escape from Stalag Luft III (showing how Hiltz, Hendley and the rest came to be captured and following their escape routes after the breakout) developer Pivotal has still managed to include a crowd-pleasing variety of gameplay styles.

LIKE WHAT EXACTLY? Well, naturally you've got the shadows 'n' searchlight escape missions, and no self-respecting *Great Escape* game would dare show its face without Hiltz's blazing Alpine motorbike run – but there's a lot more besides. Escapee MacDonald's missions kick off in a Lancaster during a bombing run over Berlin. There are out-and-out combat missions with Sedgwick when he joins the French Resistance en route to Spain. Playing as Hendley the scrounger, the game comes over all *Ico* as you're forced to lead blind-as-a-bat forger Blythe to safety. Then there's Big X and MacDonald's pursuit by Nazi goons through Berlin in an edgy, nerve-racking mission. And that's just a taster. Oh, and in case you're wondering, in the game it's not just Coburn and Bronson who can make it all the way home.

SOUNDS GOOD. BUT IS IT, Y' KNOW, SOLID? We're still a little unsure about the twitchy motorbike handling in Hiltz's escape missions. We want meaty, dirt-churning powerslides but the handling feels a little too polite right now. That said, the rest of the levels we tried bore the graphical quality and intuitive controls we've come to expect from Pivotal in its *Conflict: Desert Storm* games. And you'd have to have a cold, cold heart not to get a thrill from hearing Steve McQueen's own voice as Hiltz (remastered from the film) and that theme music. The game will be released from the development 'cooler' soon, so expect the definitive review next month. **PSF**

opinion

PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA

THE GREAT ESCAPE is looking every bit the inventive WW2 stealth/action game and fully respects the much-loved movie classic. And it's from the guys behind *Conflict: Desert Storm* – that can't hurt.



HOT OR NOT?

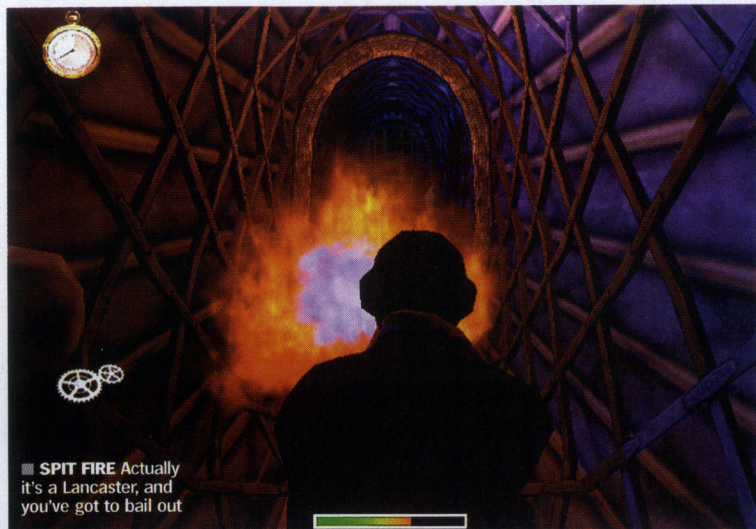
TEPID

WARM

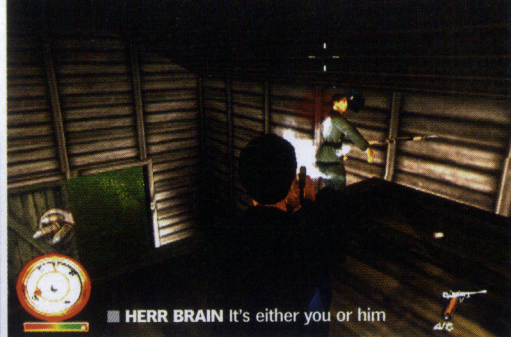
HOT

BOILING

MELTDOWN



■ **SPIT FIRE** Actually it's a Lancaster, and you've got to bail out



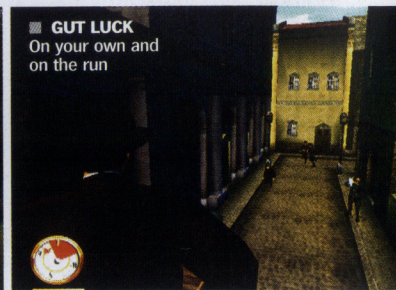
■ **HERR BRAIN** It's either you or him



■ **FORGE** Who said put all the escapers in one camp?



■ **LEAP THIS TIME** Hilt's bike escape is the stuff of legends



■ **GUT LUCK** On your own and on the run

VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF STRIFE

The Great Escape isn't all about stealing bed boards and stuffing your pants with dirt. At least, not on PS2



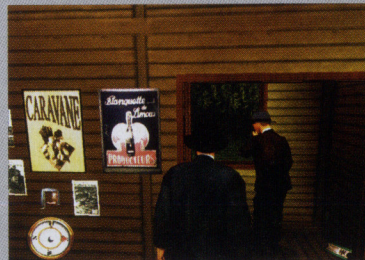
SHOOT!

You can only dig tunnels and make potato moonshine for so long. Once you've made your escape (hopefully a great one) you're going to have to take the fight to the Nazis.



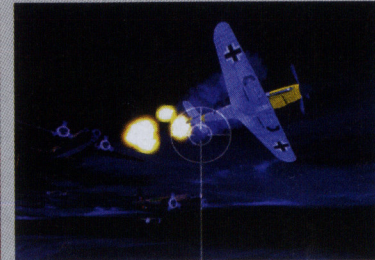
DRIVE!

Of course you'll be able to bike it up a storm as Hilt, but you'll also be able to drive a handful of other vehicles during missions. Like this troop carrier complete with fixed machine gun. Die Nazi scum.



LEAD!

Okay, maybe not as dramatic as shooting or driving, but the challenge of leading the short-sighted Blythe past all sorts of Nazi-related obstacles makes for great gameplay nevertheless.



SHOOT! (PART 2)

The Third Reich is busily giving your bomber a hot-lead makeover. Time to show the Swastika boys in their flying machines what for from the rear gunner's post. Have that flying Fritz.

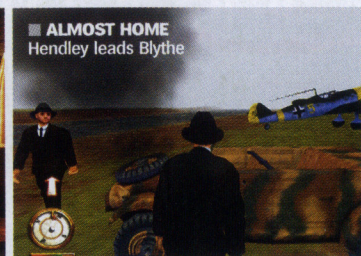


BORDER BREAK

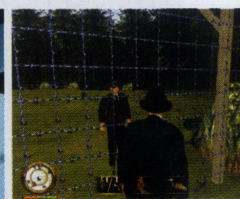
You're not the only one with transport



■ **ROLLING SHOCK** Don't look but there's Big X

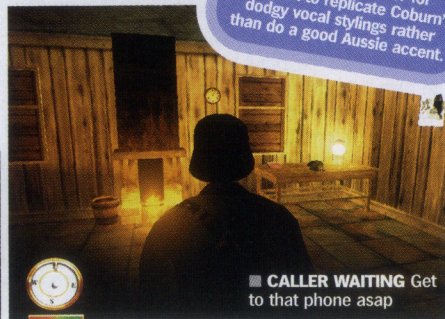
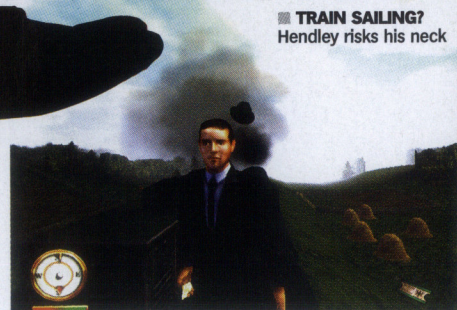


■ **ALMOST HOME** Hendley leads Blythe



DID YOU KNOW?
You may remember, in the film of *The Great Escape*, James Coburn's Australian accent is one of the ropiest in cinematic history. To keep the game as authentic as possible, Pivotal asked its voice actor for Sedgwick to replicate Coburn's dodgy vocal stylings rather than do a good Aussie accent.

■ **TRAIN SAILING?** Hendley risks his neck



■ **CALLER WAITING** Get to that phone asap



■ **POW POV** Check before you leave



NAME Jak II: Renegade
PUBLISHER Sony
DEVELOPER Naughty Dog
WEB SITE <http://www.us.playstation.com/games/SCUS-97265>
RELEASE October

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE 60%

JAK II: RENEGADE

The epic adventure of a boy and his weasel comes of age!

WHAT'S THE STORY WITH JAK BEING BACK?

Whoever it was that said "The revolution will not be televised" was only partially right. The revolution will indeed occur on television, but it will occur thanks to the good old PS2. That, at least, is the lofty goal of *Jak II*. Considering the original *Jak and Daxter* sold spectacularly well, it would have been the easiest thing in the world for developers Naughty Dog to just churn out a dodgy sequel with few real enhancements. But in this post-GTA3 gaming world Naughty Dog knows that just isn't good enough. So *Jak II* has been given a complete overhaul.

THE CUTESY PLATFORMER GROWS UP AND GETS MEAN?

You can tell something has changed simply from looking at the screens of *Jak II*. Certainly they retain the classic cartoonish style that makes Naughty Dog games so appealing, but there is an edge there as well; an edge of darkness that speaks of a more mature gaming experience. Jak himself has been given a complete facelift. Now he looks mean and cool. He sports a goatee that does make him look a little like the "brooding one" from a boy band, but the fact he now packs major weaponry should dispel any sense that he's anything less than serious. The plot of the game speaks volumes of its more adult oriented theme. Since the last time we saw Jak he has been taken prisoner, experimented upon, escaped and is now out for revenge. A platform game where the goal is revenge? It's hard to imagine Mario embarking on such a quest.

SO HOW DOES IT PLAY?

From the tantalisingly brief glimpses we've had so far, *Jak II* looks like it could be a serious contender for the "Best Platform Game Ever" bragging rights. It simply bristles new additions. Not only can Jak use four different types of guns and numerous hand-to-hand combat moves, but now he can turn into "Dark Jak". Dark Jak is basically an invincible, demonic Jak who can blaze a blistering path through his enemies. But what impresses more than the increased combat options, and even more than the cool hoverboard you've been given, is the world in which the game takes place. You can interact with characters, hurt civilians, steal hover cars and basically explore a massive universe while taking part in a quest where you'll see friends die, be betrayed by others and try to wreak revenge on those who have wronged you. ■ AO

opinion

PlayStation 2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA

JAK II: RENEGADE is beautiful to behold and fun to play. If Naughty Dog manage to make good on all their very ambitious promises this could end up being one cracking title. Oh, and yes this time you can play as Daxter!



HOT OR NOT?

TEPID

WARM

HOT

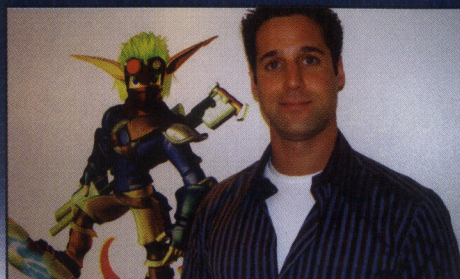
BOILING

MELTDOWN

Q&A

THE BARK BEHIND THE NAUGHTY DOG

Naughty Dog has been responsible for such classics as Crash Bandicoot and the original Jak and Daxter for PS2. Anthony O'Connor talks turkey (and weasel) with Naughty Dog President and Co-Founder, Jason Rubin.



OPS2: This update is a pretty brave move for something like Jak. I mean we never saw Crash Bandicoot grow a goatee and start packing heat, so why Jak?

JR: Crash would never talk or shoot people. He just wasn't that kind of guy. To try and update Crash would be like what they did with the *Sonic the Hedgehog* Saturday morning cartoon. It was awful. Once Sonic talked he was dead to me. Jak's a little different in that the original JAD game was a transitional title. We almost got where we wanted to but not quite. With *Jak II* we've gotten there. We've given Jak depth, a voice and a quest for revenge.

OPS2: What innovation are you most proud of in *Jak II*?

JR: Integration. We looked at the current trends in gaming – like *GTA: Vice City* – and we realised it wasn't the guns and the hookers that made that game, it was the freedom. It was the fact you could tackle any given problem seven different ways. That's never been done in a character adventure game before. In *Jak II* you can do whatever you want. You want to take out your hoverboard on a tiny ledge? You can. It might be a stupid thing to do, but we'll let you try it anyway. Integrating freedom with a genre that's traditionally restrictive is what I'm most proud of.

OPS2: Why do you think games are moving in this new direction?

JR: I think games are growing up with the gamers. Back when we did *Crash Bandicoot* that was like the highest level of gaming at the time. But times have changed and gamers demand more. People don't just want to play a game, they want to be allowed to explore a world; a cool world, and that's what they get with *Jak II*. I think the progress of gamer sophistication and improved technology is what has made these new titles possible and it's really exciting. It's not a geeky or uncool thing to play a game any more. It's as acceptable as watching a movie or reading a book.

OPS2: So what's the next evolution in gaming?

JR: I guess we'll have to wait and see.



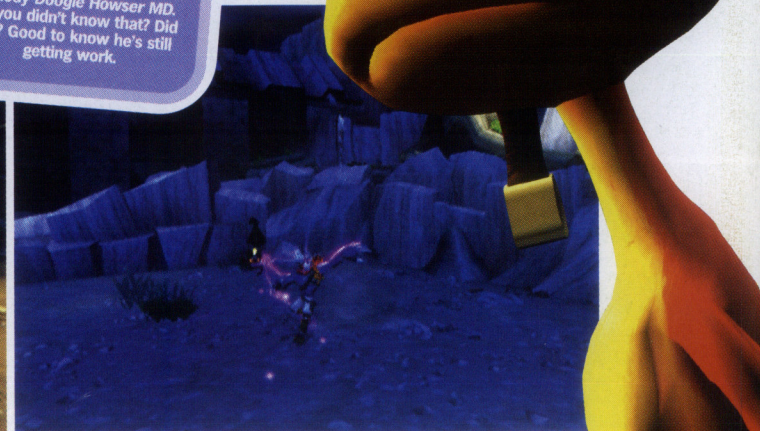
■ BLUE HEAVEN Killing enemies will leave a huge amount of the dark stuff lying around. Check on your health bar to see how full of it you are



■ MAD PROFESSOR
Help this weirdo out and save the world

DID YOU KNOW?

Max Casella, the cheeky voice of the furry Daxter also played Doogie Howser's best friend Vince Delphino in the '80s kids comedy *Doogie Howser MD*. Bet you didn't know that? Did you? Good to know he's still getting work.



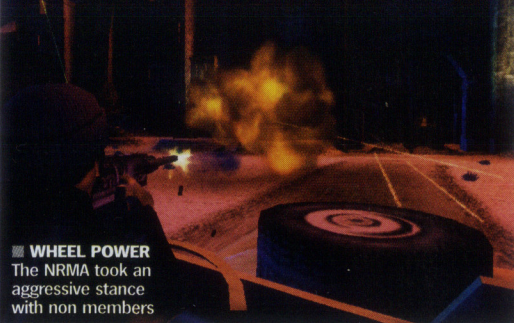


NAME Conflict: Desert Storm II
PUBLISHER Atari
DEVELOPER Pivotal Games
WEBSITE www.pivotalgames.com
LAST SEEN OPS2#16

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

60%

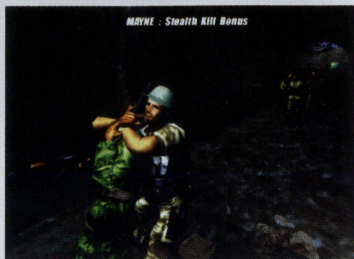
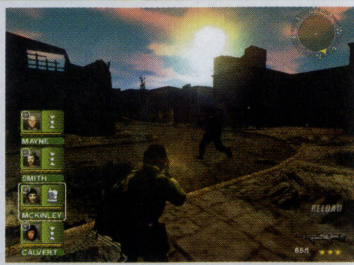
RELEASE DATE
OCTOBER 2003



WHEEL POWER
The NRMA took an aggressive stance with non members



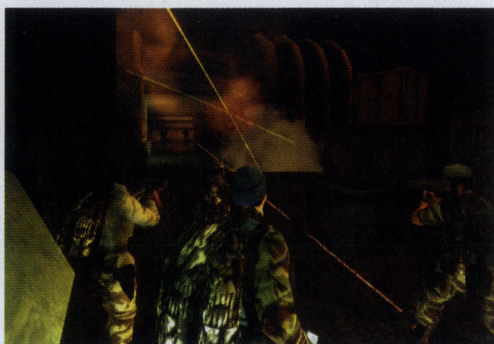
BLUSH HOUR
Lighting has been dramatically improved



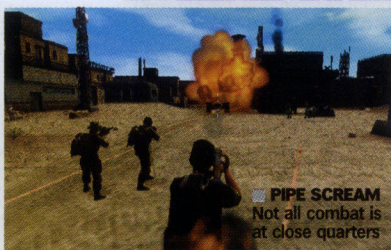
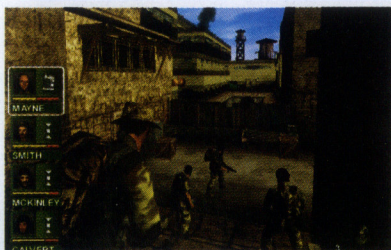
'GUESS WHO?' There's no surprise like a nasty surprise. He didn't see that coming



BLUE MURDER Your mission may start during the night, but by the time things hot up, dawn may be breaking...



FIRE WORKS Tracer bullets have NATO colour coding. Red is baaad news

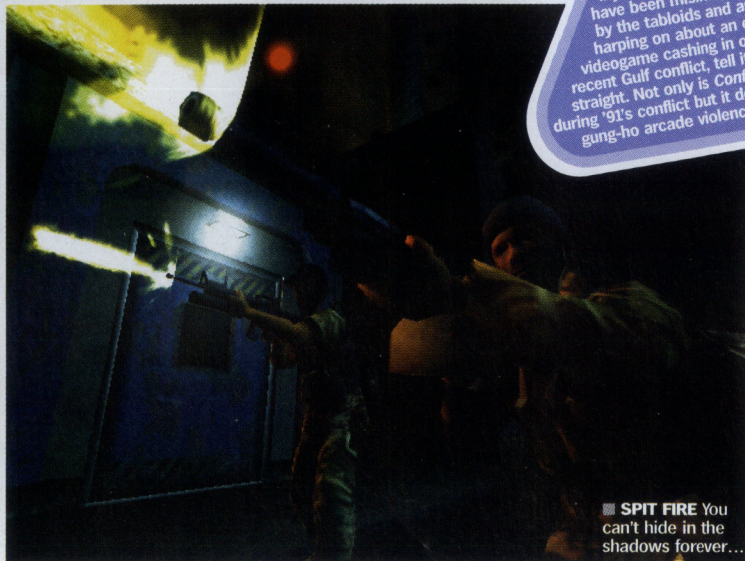


PIPE SCREAM
Not all combat is at close quarters

IT'S DISGUSTING!
If your parental units have been misinformed by the tabloids and are harping on about an evil videogame cashing in on the recent Gulf conflict, tell it to 'em straight. Not only is Conflict II set during '91's conflict but it doesn't go for gung-ho arcade violence at all...



HEAVY METAL Each of your teammates has a special skill



SPIT FIRE You can't hide in the shadows forever...

CONFLICT: DESERT STORM II

The bad boys of desert warfare are heading back to Baghdad

IS IT BASED ON THE FIRST GULF WAR OR THE MORE RECENT SKIRMISH?

Conflict Desert Storm II takes place in a slightly fictionalised version of the early nineties. So don't expect any missions where you go looking for non-existent weapons of mass destruction here. What you do get, however, is more of the same co-operative combat action that made the original so popular. Once more you are put in control of a four man squad, armed and equipped as you best see fit, and once again you are sent into the badlands of Iraq, where you face hostile opposition everywhere you go.

SOUNDS JUST LIKE THE FIRST ONE, WHAT'S CHANGED THIS TIME?

Well, not much really. *Conflict Desert Storm II* seems to firmly believe in the adage "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." That's not to say that what we've seen is a total retread of the prequel, it's just that a gamer familiar with the controls and layout of the first game will have no trouble coming to grips with this one. Although it's good to see a return of the tutorial level for novice players, replete with the angry, redneck drill Sergeant barking orders at you.

WHAT'S THE OBJECTIVE THIS TIME AROUND?

Well, like the first game the objectives vary from rescuing fellow soldiers pinned down by enemy fire, to fragging communications buildings and the like. In addition to what we've come to expect from this title, is an increased reliance on stealth rather than just running and gunning. Also the setting seems to be more urban in style, at least at the start of the game, evoking images from the movie *Black Hawk Down*, with its burnt out buildings and potential snipers blasting from any window ledge.

POSSIBLE SOCOM BEATER?

It's really too early to tell at this stage. The game mechanics are sound at the moment but the graphics and animation still need quite a bit of work. Having said that, the longer missions, more vehicle control and the unique four-man-team system lead us to believe that *Conflict Desert Storm II* will be a hit with armchair generals everywhere. □ AO

opinion

PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA

CONFLICT: DSII promises to better its superb forbear by a long chalk with its intelligent, strategic, team-based action. A shameless cash-in on recent events? You know better than that...

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN



monitor

60 MINUTES WITH

NAME Dog's Life
PUBLISHER Sony
DEVELOPER Frontier
WEBSITE www.frontier.co.uk
LAST SEEN N/A

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

60%

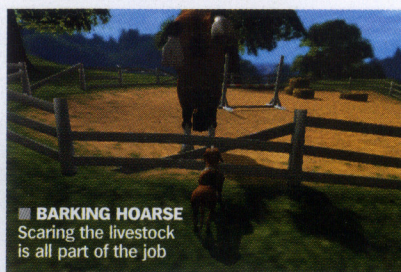
RELEASE DATE
OCTOBER



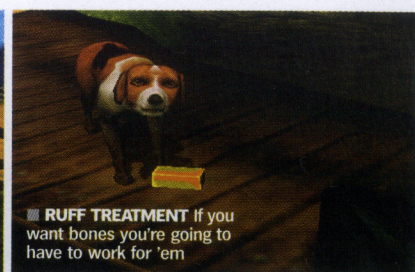
To track footprints move in close and press

R1

■ NO WITNESSES
He's way too chirpy.
Time to start mauling



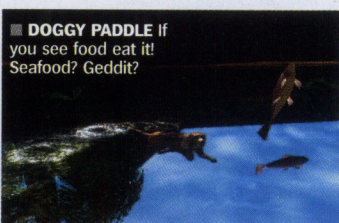
■ BARKING HORSE
Scaring the livestock
is all part of the job



■ RUFF TREATMENT If you
want bones you're going to
have to work for 'em



■ DOGGY PADDLE If
you see food eat it!
Seafood? Geddit?



■ DOG'S DINNER
After all, there's only
so many scraps you
can eat...

WHAT'S THE STORY?
The brainchild of David Braben, the man behind the classic videogame *Elite*, *Dog's Life* is shaping up to be a funky, canine *GTA*. You play Jake and explore huge swathes of Midwest America looking for your dognapped friend Daisy. Cue tons of mini-games as you interact with humans, take control of other breeds of dog and mark your territory through 40+ hours of gameplay.

DOG'S LIFE

It's official, you're a son of a bitch!

00:00 Try to hide utter glee as *Dog's Life* disc arrives in the office. Nonchalantly run around desk stifling yelps of "Me! Me! Me!" as cynical, infinitely cooler colleagues shake heads and go back to *Vice City* and *TimeSplitters 2*. "But you get to be a dog..." doesn't impress as justificatory gambit.

05:30 With a wet nose (must find tissue) and bright eyes, boot up game. Far from being a graphical dog's dinner, the game looks the mutt's nuts. Take control of Jake the beagle pup and immediately try and locate the 'crap' and 'play dead' buttons. Jump, sit, lie down and cock leg but fail to pinch canine loaf.

12:45 Spy horse in nearby paddock. Bound over fence and bark furiously at it for a while. Get bored, open window in owner's house and leap through. Hmm, juicy steak in microwave. Find a way to mash paws on door and snaffle prime meat. Now time to bite the hand that feeds us.

26:25 Enter utterly fantastic, 'first-pooch view' complete with snout pointing the way. Now we can see smells. After overturning the bins for scraps, follow pungent red clouds until we find irritatingly chirpy boy with

what looks like a target on his T-shirt.

Can't decide whether to maul him first or hump his Levis. Dismayed to find we can do neither. Dig for bone instead.

45:36 Looking a bit muddy and alert posture is sagging. Must be hungry and thirsty. Head to river and doggy paddle after salmon for a while. Bound over to nearby village and raid barbecues, bins and worry postman. Then it happens. Deposit steaming 'link' on a parked taxi's bonnet. Well, when you gotta go, you gotta to go... ☐ PSF



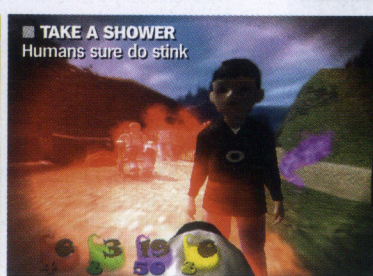
■ MEALS ON HEELS Postle's scared of you. Now do you bite him or lend him a paw to find a missing letter?



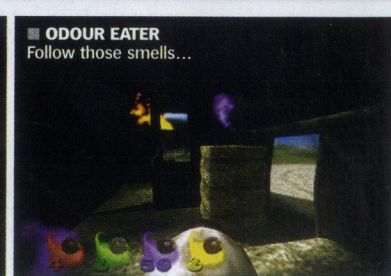
■ TAKING THE STRAIN
One steaming hood
ornament coming up...



■ HIT AND RUN? Take
care, little doggy



■ TAKE A SHOWER
Humans sure do stink



■ ODOUR EATER
Follow those smells...

opinion
PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA

DOG'S LIFE is a quirky little number and it'll probably only sell 25 copies, but there's no escaping the originality and quality in the marrow of *Dog's Life* gameplay bone.

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID
WARM
HOT
BOILING
MELTDOWN

monitor

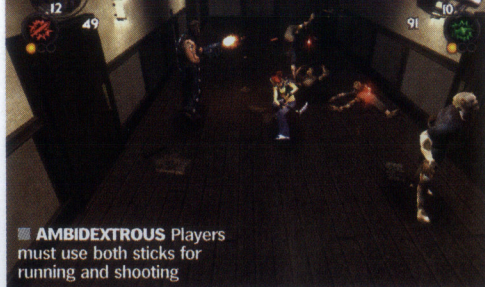
HANDS-ON

HUNTER
THE RECKONING
REDEEMER

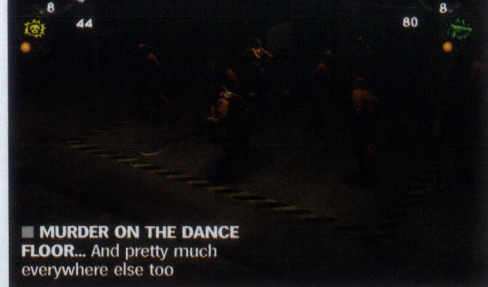
NAME Hunter: The Reckoning
Wayward
PUBLISHER Vivendi
DEVELOPER High Voltage Software
WEBSITE www.vugames.com
RELEASED October

PERCENTAGE
COMPLETE

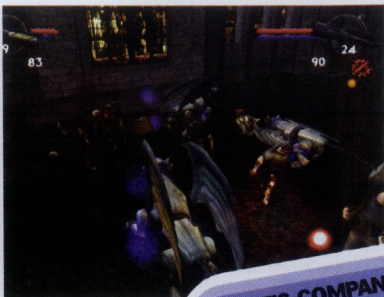
60%



■ **AMBIDEXTROUS** Players must use both sticks for running and shooting

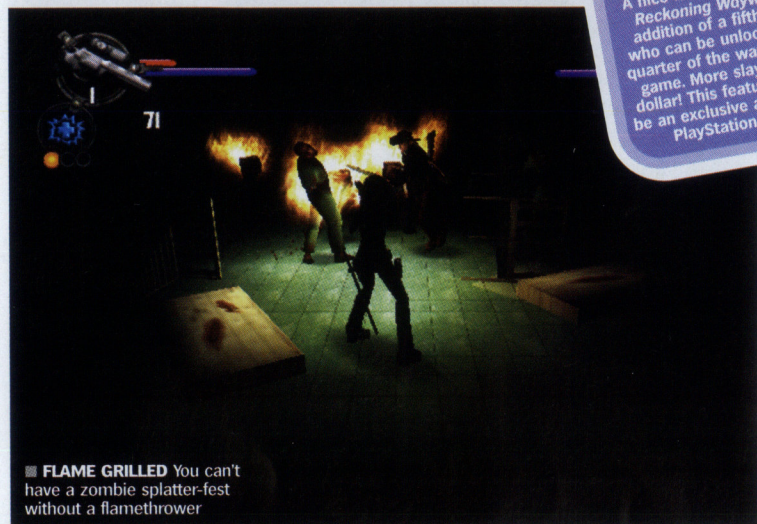


■ **MURDER ON THE DANCE FLOOR...** And pretty much everywhere else too



FIVE'S COMPANY

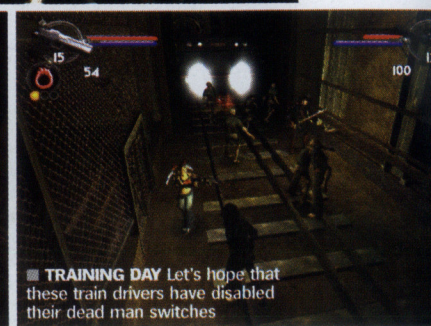
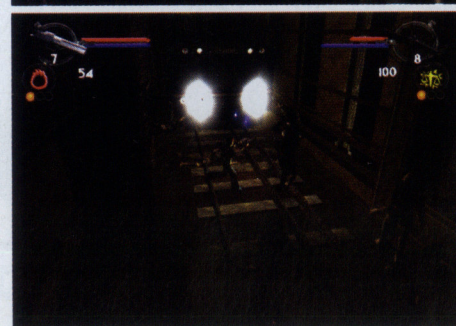
A nice feature of Hunter: The Reckoning Wayward is the addition of a fifth character who can be unlocked about a quarter of the way through the game. More slayers for your dollar! This feature appears to be an exclusive addition for the PlayStation 2 version.



■ **FLAME GRILLED** You can't have a zombie splatter-fest without a flamethrower



■ **BLACK MAGIC** Well, it's blue but it's still potent stuff



■ **TRAINING DAY** Let's hope that these train drivers have disabled their dead man switches



HUNTER: THE RECKONING WAYWARD

This Hunting business sounds familiar, why is that?

HUNTER: THE RECKONING WAYWARD should sound familiar to the videogame savvy. It's the sequel to the Xbox-only hit of 2002. Set two years after the events of *Hunter: The Reckoning*, this title is basically more of the same. That is, four professional monster killers explore the cursed town of Ashcroft collecting weapons, finding treasures and killing the armies of beasties that lurk in the alleys, graveyards and morgues of this once pleasant town.

NOT EXACTLY ORIGINAL - WHAT SETS HUNTER APART FROM THE PACK? Essentially the game is like a modern day *Gauntlet*. You run through streets instead of dungeons, and subways instead of castles but basically this is not a unique gaming concept. Having said that, so far *Hunter: The Reckoning Wayward* has many likeable qualities. The ability to choose from a cast of four (and later, five) characters is a definite plus. The fact your arsenal consists of melee weapons, heavy artillery and spell casting powers doesn't hurt either. The graphics are really first rate and seem to suffer little slow down when the zombies and other assorted creatures attack en masse - and they will. Sometimes the screen will be so thick with shambling monsters you'll barely have room to swing an axe!

MONSTERS ALL AROUND? HOW WILL WE DEFEAT THEM?

Where *Hunter* impresses most is with its two player co-operative mode. In fact this game seems custom designed for said mode. Whereas the huge maps and constant exploring and backtracking may seem mildly tedious when tackled alone, having a mate along lifts the game to a whole new level. Frantically running backwards blowing lead into a posse of "Rots" is something that's very hard not to enjoy. On the downside the missions can be a little overlong and repetitive, and at this stage some of the collision detection for the ranged weapons is a trifle iffy. However, these problems should be easy to fix. With a bit of polish *Hunter: The Reckoning Wayward* should be a monster hunting classic. □ AO



■ **THIS YEAR'S BLACK...** is still the real black apparently

opinion
PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA

HUNTER: THE RECKONING WAYWARD is the first *Hunter* title for the PS2 and if all goes well - and the few niggling problems are fixed - it could make a significant impact.

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID
WARM
HOT
BOILING
MELTDOWN



monitor

HANDS-ON



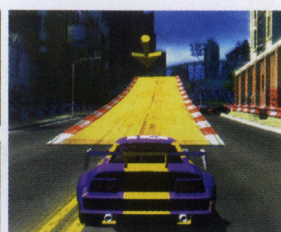
NAME Destruction Derby: Arenas
PUBLISHER Sony
DEVELOPER Studio 33
WEBSITE www.scee.net
LAST SEEN OPS2#16

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

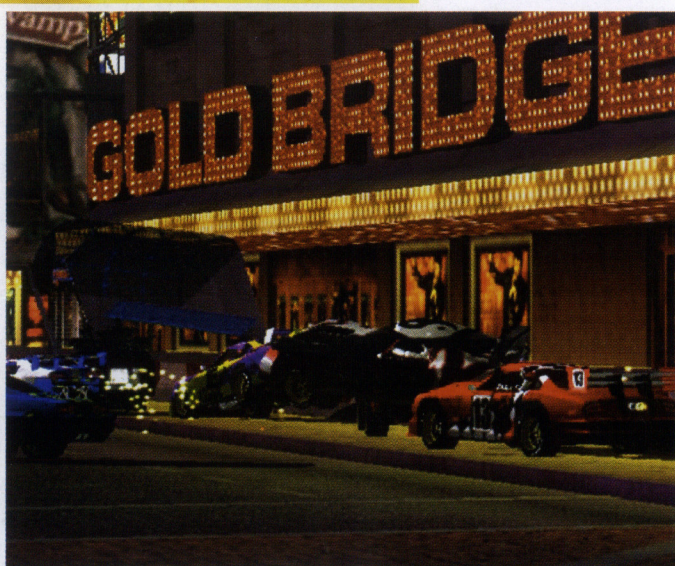
RELEASE DATE
SEPTEMBER
2003



■ **KNACKERED FLAG** 1st place, but plenty of bodywork to repair



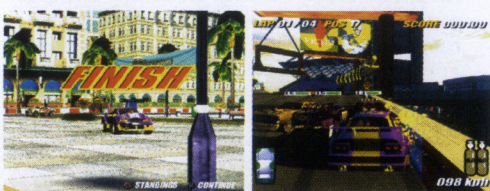
■ **JUMP AROUND** Looks spectacular and helps the carnage



DEVIL'S ADVOCATE
It's fun and frolics, but why not just make a souped-up version of WipeOut online with all-new tracks and tunes? Surely that's what we've all been waiting for? While DDA looks solid, can it generate the same following as its futuristic predecessor?

DESTRUCTION DERBY: ARENAS

Auto Modellista meets WipeOut online with, y'know, cars and stuff



■ **DRIVER ERROR** Each driver has their own attitude and paint job. It doesn't make all that much difference on the track though



AW, COME ON WE'RE SICK OF DRIVING GAMES. SO WHAT'S NEW ABOUT THIS ONE? Well, nothing really. But if you get all jacked up over being able to damage cars in good, old-fashioned, smash-'em-up racing style then look no further. This literally looks smashing, with none of the Slipknot styling and firepower of the *Twisted Metal: Black* Online of this world. It's back to stockcar basics with a bit of high-octane anarchy chucked in for good measure and a range of arenas in which to lock horns with AI cars or, even better, up to 16 online players.

SO IT'S JUST ANOTHER CHANCE TO RAISE ONLINE HELL. WHAT IF WE'RE NOT CONNECTED BY THEN? Don't worry, you backwards fools, there are a huge number of multiplayer and single-player modes to get stuck into. The wrecking racing career option takes you to a variety of weird and wonderful tracks full of tenacious, not to say downright dirty, opponents. Seriously, the amount of times you'll turn the air blue because another driver's nudged your rear bumper, sending you cavorting into the barrier is infuriating. But then this is all about exacting revenge by turning every other car into a burning wreck.

HOLD THE PHONE, WHAT'S THE EMPHASIS HERE? FIGHTING OR RACING? Up to you really. If you want to win the race sections using deft analogue stick skills and well-timed turns, then be our guest. Nitrous, repair and grip power-ups dotted around make tactics a big part of the fun. Don't forget for one second that anything goes. And don't say we didn't warn you when someone spoils your racing line and shiny bodywork by gleefully smashing you somewhere into next week and taking the chequered flag before your burning eyes. That's *Destruction Derby* for you. □ MW

opinion
PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA

DESTRUCTION DERBY: ARENAS looks set to be high order car-nage. Whether or not it'll take off online remains to be seen but its slick styling and no-holds barred gameplay make for plenty of fun.

HOT OR NOT?
TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN

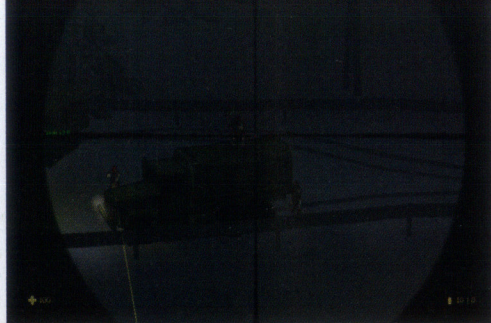
HANDS ON



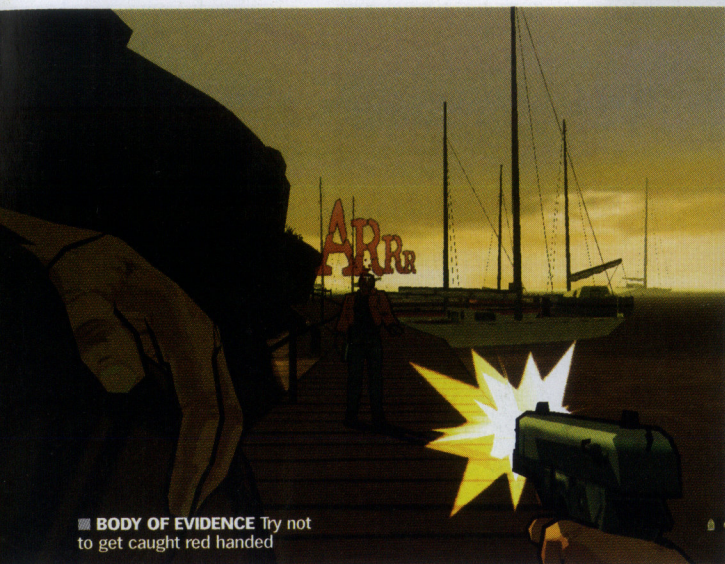
NAME XIII
PUBLISHER Ubi Soft
DEVELOPER Ubi Soft
WEBSITE www.ubi.com/FR/Games/xiii
RELEASE October

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

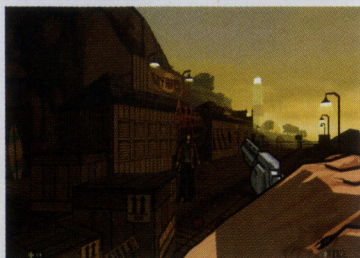
75%



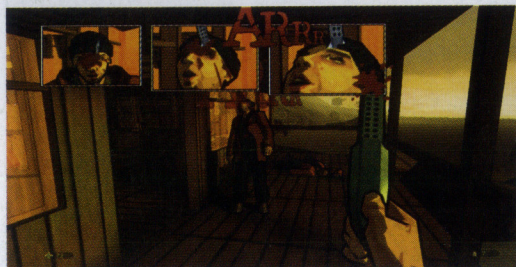
■ **ICE TO SEE YOU** Go for headshots to drop enemies quickly



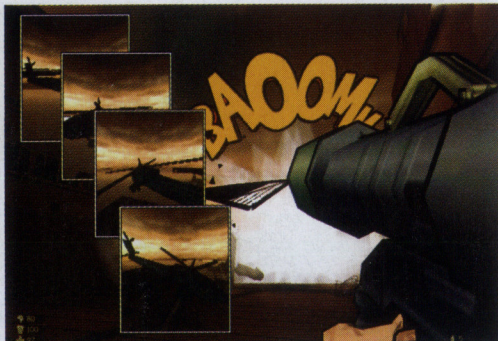
■ **BODY OF EVIDENCE** Try not to get caught red handed



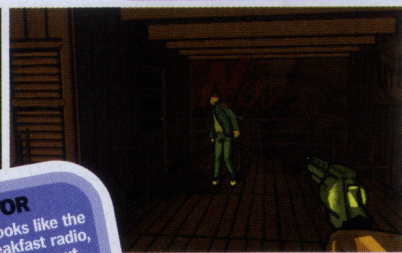
■ **'GUESS WHO!'** There's no surprise like a nasty surprise. He didn't see that coming



■ **HE LOST HIS HEAD...** That's no way to get a-head in life...

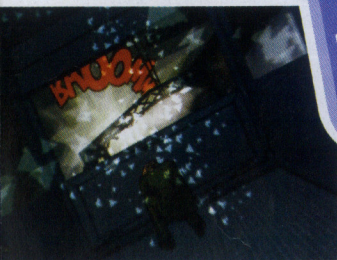


■ **KA-BLAMMO** Batman would be proud



STAR FACTOR

Steady on, Tiger. It looks like the superstar duo of breakfast radio, Merrick and Rosso, have put aside their microphones for a moment to become fully fledged characters in XIII. In the digitised characters they'll only be thugs in the background but they'll be fully playable in the multiplayer mode. Choice, Bro!



■ **FIREPOWER** This sniper rifle packs tactical nukes



XIII

Cartoon violence has never been so gloriously gory

HOW VIOLENT CAN IT BE? Having much more in common with ultra-gory Japanese Anime flicks than any of our homegrown cartoons, XIII may look harmless enough, but the moment you fire a harpoon gun at a random thug you'll be treated to a gruesome slow-motion close-up of the bleeding bloke as he drops to the ground with a harpoon sticking out of his head. Pistols, machine guns, sniper rifles and some particularly nasty throwing knives, are all on hand for you to carve up the opposition with.

WHAT IF I JUST WANT TO SMACK THEM? Then, this is the game for you. As well as an armoury full of guns, XIII lets you pick up pretty much anything and clobber your enemies over the noggin with it. In one gritty bar room brawl that we witnessed, it was possible to pick up and use bottles, ashtrays, pool cues and even bar stools. The combat is made even more satisfying thanks to the smaller details, like the way the bar stools shatter into kindling on impact and the Batman-style "Thwack!" sound effect bubbles that flash across the screen.

METAL GEAR SOLID XIII? Don't expect to be hiding under cardboard boxes or hand-over-handing along ledges, but sneaking around undetected and covering your tracks is often called for. That old snake trick – picking up dead bodies and stuffing them somewhere out of sight – must be mastered if you want to finish any missions without tripping every alarm in the complex.

GENERAL PRACTITIONER? Agent XIII finds himself in a cable car with an ageing General high up in some snowy mountains. Before anyone can admire the view, the cable car is shot down and XIII must tackle half an alpine army and keep the General alive at all costs. Why? We don't know yet, but we do know we had plenty of fun trying. □ NP

opinion

PlayStation 2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE - AUSTRALIA

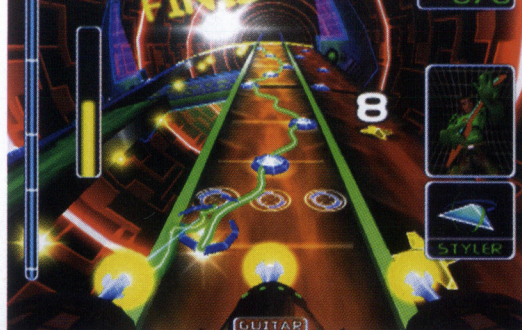
XIII seemed like an odd concept – marrying cartoon graphics with violent FPS gameplay – but the game has come together brilliantly to become one of the hottest shooters on the horizon.



HOT OR NOT?

TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN





monitor

IMPORT TEST

NAME	Amplitude
PUBLISHER	Sony
DEVELOPER	Harmonix
WEBSITE	www.harmonixmusic.com
LAST SEEN	N/A

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE **95%** RELEASE DATE SEPTEMBER 2003



PODIUM DANCER Your in-game avatar bops in time to the music
FREE STYLE This power-up allows for freeform jamming



HIT PARADE The strength of Amplitude lies in the music itself - only a couple of tunes start to annoy

SEQUEL SPLURGE
 Those of a musical persuasion will be acquainted with Amplitude's precursor, Frequency. Aside from obvious changes, Harmonix's sequel will come complete with online play shortly after its release next month.

AMPLITUDE

Will our love of niche interest music games ever wane?

DOESN'T THIS LOOK A BIT LIKE THAT REZ GAME NO ONE BOUGHT? 'Look, yes, but unlike Rez's pompous, soulless self-indulgence, *Amplitude* is good to 'play'. Like, really *rather* good. We know this for two reasons. One, because we've been playing it for so long; and two, because people are giving us the eye that says, "Less playing, more writing, sunshine..." And, in a public arena (eg, the OPS2 games room), when *Amplitude*'s on, every bloke and his uncle wants a go - a sure sign of quality.

DOES IT INVOLVE PRESSING BUTTONS IN TIME TO POPULAR MUSIC? Yes. Of course it does. Can't you tell from the simple-yet-multicoloured graphics that photo-realistic image-wizardry isn't the name of this game. This is about rhythmic control or lack of it. Still not with us? Well, short of inventing aural screenshots, the stars of this beat, groove 'n' rhythm fest are the songs. Our personal favourites include the likes of David Bowie's *Everybody Says Hi*, Run-DMC's *King Of Rock*, Slipknot's *I Am Hated* and Blink 182's *Rock Show*. Better still, you actually play them with your own pinky rings.

SHUT UP! HOW SO? Buttons **L1**, **R1** and **L2** become the Dual Shock equivalent of Ivories, strings, sticks and knobs as you unlock sounds from a track with

the aid of a laser gun. It looks and sounds rather retro-future and complicated. But it's not. *Amplitude* is the finest example of 'in-the-zone' gaming. Watch that incandescent tube whirl away into the distance as you stroke the notes out and - *space out man!* - try not to fall into a trance of blissful concentration. No word of a lie - it actually feels like you just played a guitar solo, keyed a Hammond organ riff or tooted out a horn track. And it makes you move. You might look like a hyperactive ape trying to wrestle your way out of a straitjacket, but inside you're having so much fun.

DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF A FAN OF SLIPKNOT NOW THEN? Oh yes. Most definitely. ☐ GW

opinion PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA

AMPLITUDE fever is unlikely to sweep the nation next month. This sort of game is usually ignored. But we can change that! Go out and buy this game when it's released. You know you want to!

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID WARM **HOT** BOILING MELTDOWN



SEEING A PATTERN Although the first set of tracks shouldn't prove too taxing, they soon become mental.



NAME Backyard Wrestling: Don't Try This At Home
PUBLISHER Atari
DEVELOPER Eidos
WEB SITE www.bywgame
RELEASE September

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

70%

CLOWNING AROUND

Insane Clown Posse members Shaggy 2 Dope and Violent Jay are not only selectable wrestlers but they also add to the awesome soundtrack. Highlights include Andrew WK, Sum 41, Supergrass and Stone Sour.

■ **BLONDES HAVE MORE FUN** Well, maybe not...

■ **THE SUPERMAN** You don't need super powers to pull this off - you just need to be crazy

■ **DISCO DANCING** Step to the left and smash your partner over the head...

BACKYARD WRESTLING: DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME

Laying the smackdown by the BBQ

SO IT'S JUST LIKE THE RUMBLES I USED TO HAVE WITH MY BROTHER? If you and your brother beat the crap out of each other with baseball bats, threw one another off two-storey buildings and set each other on fire, then yes, *Backyard Wrestling* will look like a regular Sunday afternoon for you. Eidos has based the over-the-top wrestling title on the American Backyard Wrestling phenomenon that showcases a bunch of blokes knocking each other out with anything Mum's left lying around the house.

IS IT MORE OVER-THE-TOP THAN THE WWE?

Definitely. *Backyard Wrestling* ditches the old ring for more unique environments like a truck stop, a gentleman's club and a slaughterhouse. Each level is completely interactive, allowing everything and anything to be used as a weapon. There are tables that can be set on fire, petrol pumps that blow up on impact, and dozens of other ways to rearrange your opponents face. But if you prefer using your bare hands to

annihilate opponents, then there are plenty of moves that will make you cringe.

WILL WE BE SEEING THE ROCK AND STONE COLD?

No. You probably won't recognise any of the 20 faces in *Backyard Wrestling* unless you've seen the shows. But there's one little hottie named Kitana who's worth keeping your eyes on. She has a range of moves that will get your control pad rumbling. Don't underestimate her or she'll smash your face in with a chair. □ PF

opinion

PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA

BACKYARD WRESTLING looks like a worthy alternative to the *SmackDown* series, with its extreme moves, unique locations and hot babes. But it's too early to tell if it will be king of the ring.

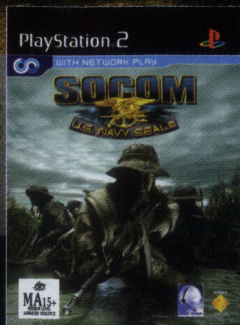
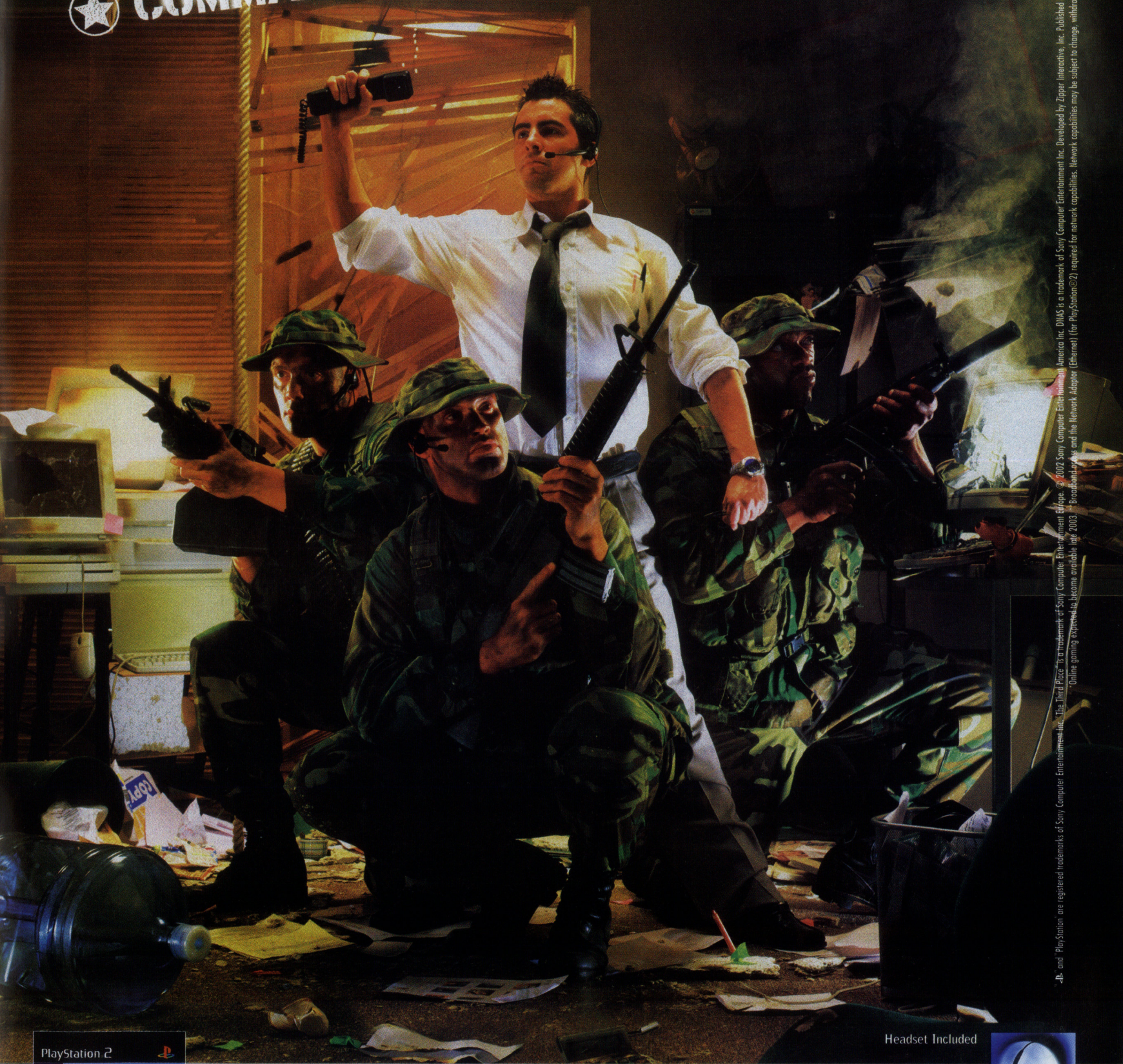


HOT OR NOT?

TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN

■ **FOOTBALL FEVER**
Try not to be the ball

★ COMMAND A TEAM. KICK SOME ASS. ★



TEAM: You and three crack US NAVY SEALs.
MISSION: Covertly locate the enemy. Make 'em pay.
EQUIPMENT: Get armed to the teeth with the SOCOM Voice Recognition Headset.
SKILLS: Control your SEAL and command your team over the headset, to infiltrate enemy positions.
EXTRAS: Get the Grade-A PlayStation®2 Network Adaptor* and broadband**. Kick real human ass online. Big time.

Headset Included



Out: 27th June 2003

www.socom-game.com

PlayStation 2
THE THIRD PLACE

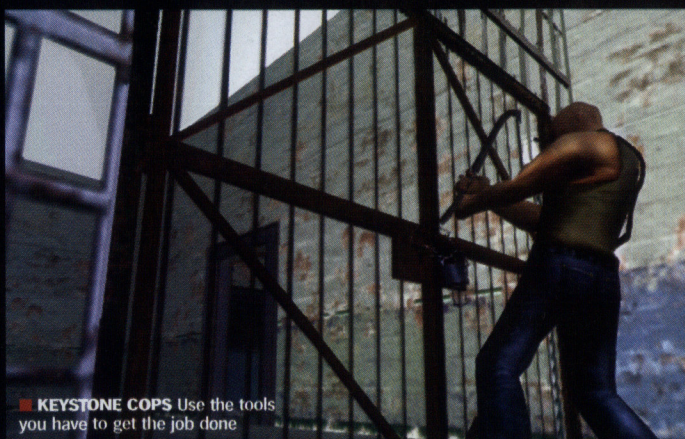
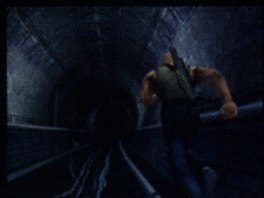


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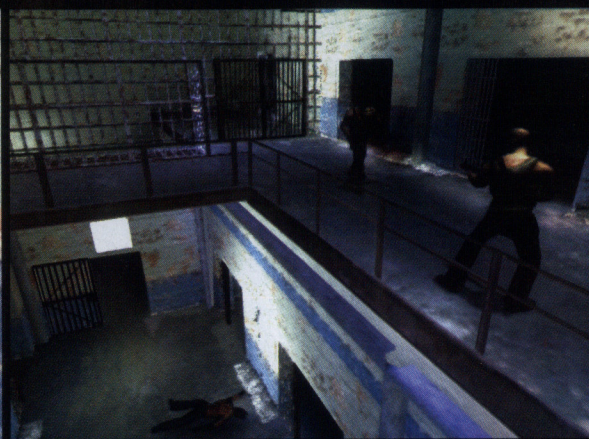


THERE GOES NEIGHBOUR

PUBLISHER: ROCKSTAR
DEVELOPER: ROCKSTAR NORTH
PLAYERS: 1
GENRE: URBAN THRILLER/
SURVIVAL/STEALTH
ADVENTURE
OUT: NOVEMBER



■ KEYSTONE COPS Use the tools you have to get the job done



CAVEAT EMPTOR* THE FIRST NEW GAME FROM THE MAKERS OF GTA: VICE CITY IS SIMPLY, BRUTAL



Never a stranger to controversy, the videogames industry has had an ongoing love/hate affair with censors all around the world. The mainstream media, outside of traditional 'gamers', has often presented "controversial" games in an alarmist way, focussing on the game's extreme yet menial elements, rather than what the game succeeds (or fails) in achieving. *Manhunt*, from the famous Rockstar North team will be no different, but it is rightfully poised to be one of the most significant games to have ever been released. As such, while *OPS2* visited Rockstar in New York, they made it clear from the outset that *Manhunt* is NOT intended for young gamers, and that it is simply a title for older gamers (think 15+) to experience.

In the case of *Manhunt*, controversy will without a doubt, become an

enormous part of the equation. Let's put that to one side for now though, while we explain a little more about the game and its origins.

PUREBRED

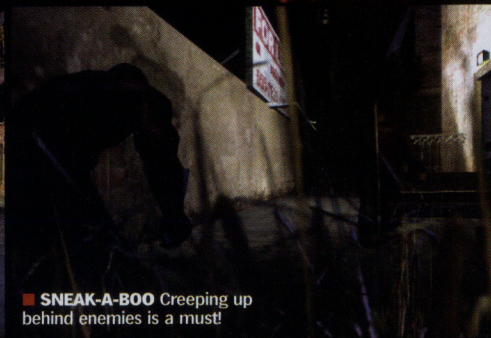
PlayStation gamers across the globe are familiar with the *Grand Theft Auto* series. Ever since the original *GTA* was released for the PSone in 1997, Rockstar North (then DMA Design) has been a company where its approach to making videogames has not been limited by creative boundaries. Admirably, Rockstar consciously 'does what it takes', in a bid to make its videogames the best. If Rockstar feels that a game will give a more profound experience by including a hooker (like in *GTA3*), it will include just that – no questions asked. Rockstar isn't one to sugar-



THE

HOOD

REC SAVE



■ **SNEAK-A-BOO** Creeping up behind enemies is a must!

> coat the character (like some other videogame companies) by merely 'suggesting' she's a hooker. Nor do they make aspects of their games gratuitous for the sake of gratuity. *BMX XXX* was one such example; where nudity was used to leverage marketing and didn't make a compelling contribution to the game. With *Manhunt*, the brutality is extreme and is used to promote the darkness and mood of the game. While it is bound to be a magnet for controversy, Rockstar maintains that this is not its aim.

The PlayStation 2 has already enjoyed the critically acclaimed and commercially successful *GTA3* and *GTA: Vice City* games. *Manhunt*, despite being from the same studio at Rockstar, is vastly different. After seeing the game in action, *Manhunt* not only plays

differently, but is a different beast altogether. *Manhunt* is the most brutal, violent and adult mass-produced videogame ever made.

Where *GTA* drew its strengths from the freedom, the size and the variety of its levels, *Manhunt* is more subtle. The levels are confined (think *Splinter Cell*) and at this stage it plays a lot like *Metal Gear Solid*, but has the dark and evil tone of the movie *8mm*.

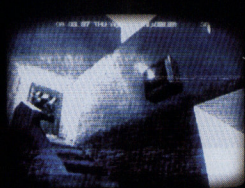
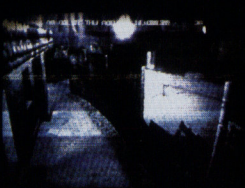
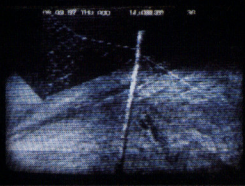
"I think you'll be pleasantly relieved to see that *Manhunt* is significantly different. This is not *Grand Theft Auto: Plus*, or *GTA: Lite* or *GTA 5*. This is hugely different in every way. The games are developed in the same building, but that's about where the similarities end. *Manhunt's* been in development for years but we've been super-secretive about it," says Rockstar CEO Terry Donovan.

As it did with *Vice City*, Rockstar has released little information on *Manhunt*. Until now. "The core gameplay mechanic is too easy to copy so we had to shut up about it. We knew that it would be "easy" to copy and we didn't want to see a crap version of it being made. Needless to say, we weren't interested in helping anyone out in doing that."

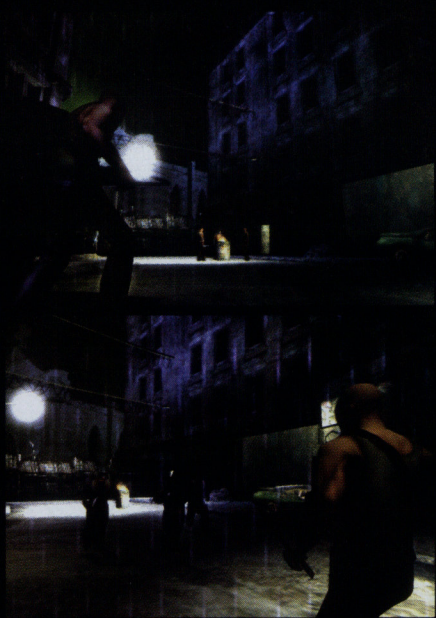
The gameplay and premise of the title is relatively



■ **SOLID GAMEPLAY** *Manhunt* *Gear Solid* anyone?



■ **AMATEUR VIDEO** The games master keeps a watch on everything



■ **GANGS OF NY** These ones won't be as easy to beat



simple, but its dark overtone really sets it apart. This game is like no other. It's based on depravity, sickness, survival and most disturbingly, murder – execution style. This, obviously, will be disturbing to some but murdering others in order to survive is the best way to promote genuine fear – and fear is what *Manhunt* is all about.

THE RUNNING MAN

You play as James Earl Cash, a death row inmate who has been sentenced to death by lethal injection. Cash is not a hero, and in the game is never treated as one. After waking in a haze after receiving the injection, Cash finds himself in the middle of the game. It's a blood sport orchestrated by one sick individual. You are in an environment with no escape. There are gangs of characters (like the Gimp in *Pulp Fiction*) all trying to track you down and kill you. Cash must kill or be killed.

You're a renegade all out on your own. Local government officials and townsfolk all assume that you are dead. Of course, that's not the case, and an anonymous sicko has different plans for you. He's the one responsible for faking your execution and now he has given you your life back just so that you can defend

it. In effect he owns you and makes you just another pawn in his game. The whole time he's watching on surveillance cameras placed around every level. You must run, fight and hide. If you are able to survive long enough, you will get to find out exactly who this guy is.

Throughout each of the levels (the final game will have roughly 20) Cash encounters various gang types. The gangs (about seven all up) all have impressive and unique AI to one another. Opponent AI has been one of the main priorities for Rockstar – and it shows. For instance, the "Hoods" gang are made up of ex-cop and disgruntled blue-collar labourers who are more brawn and less brain. Then there are gangs like the "Smilies", who are more alert. Sneaking up on them for a kill is a far more difficult affair. Not only are they more likely to hear you, they are more random (like real people) in their movements, making their behaviour around the level rather unpredictable.

To add variety, there are also different objectives to be accomplished within each level. While most of the levels are sick "games" purely based around survival and death, there are others where you either focus on escape, hunting or stealth. One particularly peculiar

game involves Cash chasing down and killing a gang member dressed as a white rabbit. There's definitely an element of weirdness that can't really be described on paper.

AT DEATH'S DOOR

Successfully clearing each of the levels is done by avoiding, hiding and ultimately killing the opposition. Killing, then, is a major aspect of the game and no matter how many times you've played games like *Soldier of Fortune*, it is still bound to be one of the most confronting yet. When Cash goes in for a kill, *Manhunt* automatically goes into a brief pre-animated cut-scene where your "prey" gets killed (much like the finishing moves in *Mortal Kombat*). Kills are easy to execute once you have used stealth to sneak up on them. Cash briefly goes into FPS mode before the killing takes place.

The death scenes are as varied as they are violent because there are countless ways to "top" an opponent. Rockstar has not yet disclosed the final amount of weapons either. We witnessed a handful of "kills" that looked realistic – and we're not just talking about the usual gunplay here.

MANHUNT IS THE LATEST IN A LONG TRADITION OF GAMES TO RAISE A FEW EYEBROWS ...

NIGHT TRAP, SEGA MEGA CD, DIGITAL PICTURES, 1992

Based around five missing girls during a lakeside holiday, this gem was the first game to use Full Motion Video (FMV) and while it didn't contain gory scenes, sex or nudity – it was deemed controversial and strictly for adults.

CARMAGEDDON, NINTENDO 64, TITUS INTERACTIVE, 2000

This driving game remains as one of the craziest to have ever been made. You get behind the wheel and start ploughing your way through crowds and pedestrians. Blood, guts and the whole shebang. Stay indoors!



POSTAL 2, PC, RUNNING WITH SCISSORS, 2003

This game has actually been banned in Australia because you simply go around killing and bashing anyone (and everyone) that you please. Mindless gaming, but a decent seller around the world. Look out for the cameo from Gary Coleman of *Diff'rent Strokes* fame.

MORTAL KOMBAT, SNES, ACCLAIM, 1993

At the time of release, the original *Mortal Kombat* caused major headlines everywhere for its gore and violent fighting. Mastering (and simply seeing) the Finishing Moves was something to behold.



PHANTASMAGORIA, PC, SIERRA, 1995

PC games have traditionally had a more sordid past, as they are less mass-market – meaning that some games slip "under the radar". *Phantasmagoria* was a horror where you (Adrienne) must kill your husband in a haunted house before he (or it) kills you.

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE, PC, ACTIVISION, 2000

This is one of the goriest FPS games available today, and it was even more so at the time of release. *SOF* allowed you to blow different parts of your enemies right off and the graphics left nothing to the imagination.

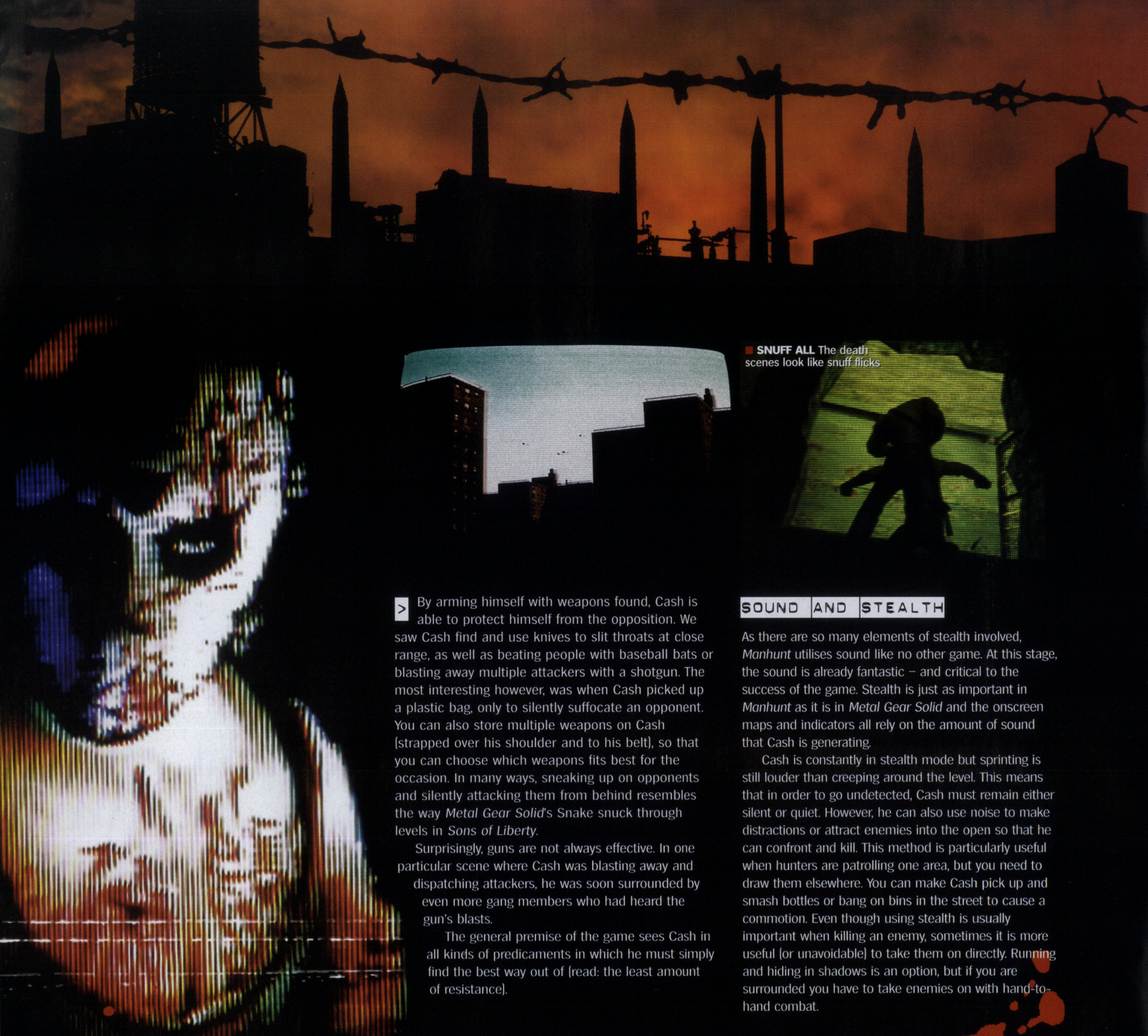


BMX XXX, PS2, ACCLAIM, 2002

BMX XXX made headlines at E3 in 2002 for all the wrong reasons. It failed badly, simply because of its poor gameplay, but some gamers were still keen enough to play it just to unlock the naked bikers and footage of real-life strippers.

THRILL KILL, PSONE, NEVER RELEASED

Thrill Kill was actually never released because it was deemed too disturbing, but it did eventually see the light of day as an altered game called *Wu Tang Clan: Taste the Pain* (Activision) for Psone. It featured four player violence and mayhem!



> By arming himself with weapons found, Cash is able to protect himself from the opposition. We saw Cash find and use knives to slit throats at close range, as well as beating people with baseball bats or blasting away multiple attackers with a shotgun. The most interesting however, was when Cash picked up a plastic bag, only to silently suffocate an opponent. You can also store multiple weapons on Cash (strapped over his shoulder and to his belt), so that you can choose which weapons fits best for the occasion. In many ways, sneaking up on opponents and silently attacking them from behind resembles the way *Metal Gear Solid*'s Snake snuck through levels in *Sons of Liberty*.

Surprisingly, guns are not always effective. In one particular scene where Cash was blasting away and dispatching attackers, he was soon surrounded by even more gang members who had heard the gun's blasts.

The general premise of the game sees Cash in all kinds of predicaments in which he must simply find the best way out of (read: the least amount of resistance).

■ **SNUFF ALL** The death scenes look like snuff flicks

SOUND AND STEALTH

As there are so many elements of stealth involved, *Manhunt* utilises sound like no other game. At this stage, the sound is already fantastic – and critical to the success of the game. Stealth is just as important in *Manhunt* as it is in *Metal Gear Solid* and the onscreen maps and indicators all rely on the amount of sound that Cash is generating.

Cash is constantly in stealth mode but sprinting is still louder than creeping around the level. This means that in order to go undetected, Cash must remain either silent or quiet. However, he can also use noise to make distractions or attract enemies into the open so that he can confront and kill. This method is particularly useful when hunters are patrolling one area, but you need to draw them elsewhere. You can make Cash pick up and smash bottles or bang on bins in the street to cause a commotion. Even though using stealth is usually important when killing an enemy, sometimes it is more useful (or unavoidable) to take them on directly. Running and hiding in shadows is an option, but if you are surrounded you have to take enemies on with hand-to-hand combat.

THE ROCKSTAR HALL OF FAME

Rockstar is fast earning itself a reputation for quality. Here's why:



STATE OF EMERGENCY, 2002
Chaotic fun seeing you run amok and cause riots. SOE helped showcase what the PS2 was capable of, with hundreds of characters running around on screen.

MIDNIGHT CLUB, 2000
The sequel is one of the most popular games to be played online in the US. It's based on illegal street racing in the world's most famous cities.

SMUGGLER'S RUN, 2000
This racer was all about smuggling contraband (drugs and money) across international borders.



generation consoles. This is as significant as Mario 64.



THRASHER: SKATE AND DESTROY, 1999
Not renowned for its gameplay, as it was released around the same time as the original *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* but it had one of the best soundtracks ever in a game. Not a bad effort though, really.

GRAND THEFT AUTO, 1997 – 2002
The most significant 3D game to be released on any of the next-

ONI, 2001

One of the most highly-underrated RPG games available on the PS2. *Oni* has now been around for years, and would still make a worthy and lengthy purchase.



MAX PAYNE, 2001
Max Payne saw the introduction of "Bullet Time", allowing your character, Max, to dodge and shoot in super slow motion. This will one day be seen as an early PS2 classic ... Max Payne 2 has also been confirmed, and Rockstar are looking to improve their winning formula. Sights have been set for a 2004 release.



THE FINAL WORD

If you haven't already noticed, Terry Donovan is passionate about the games that his company releases. Here's his final words on the forthcoming release of Manhunt:

"We haven't gone full fantasy mode but I think the cultural references in there are a little more disparate and harder to get your head 'round than 'here's the '80s or here's the '70s'. It's drawing from modern day left right and centre and you'll hopefully agree with us that we've done something very interesting. We think that Rockstar North is going to deliver something pretty special."

By "locking on" your enemy (as you do when shooting someone in *GTA*), Cash can fight. Cash has superior fighting skills to most of the gang members. However, fights – especially against an entire gang – will usually result in death or severe damage. Remember, you must kill or be killed!

F*&K CENSORSHIP

Terry Donovan knows that Rockstar games have never breezed through ratings and censor's playtests like a Mickey Mouse videogame would. Equally, he knows that *Manhunt* is bound to ruffle some feathers but insists that the game is made specifically for a particular audience.

"*GTA*, and most games, are about putting the gaming power into your hands. *Manhunt* is about the total absence of power. *Manhunt* crosses a few taboo issues. You wouldn't expect us to do something that was suitable for children and this, in no way, is. This is unapologetically adult. And that's not for controversy's sake. We just believe that that's at the heart of the PlayStation audience."

He continued, "It's not trying to be controversial but it doesn't make any apologies for being an adult game

either. It's just direct. It is what it is.

"It's very dirty. Twisted. It toys with reality and draws from films like *8mm*, *Jakob's Ladder*, *Surviving the Game*, *Marathon Man* and then some literary stuff along the lines of *Alice in Wonderland*. And then at the same time, there are the elements of reality TV and snuff movies. You've got a whole kind of mix of things going on there of what's real and what's constructed. What really is the difference between the two? And if there is one, does it really matter? Where is that line?"

GETTING IT

High concept games like *Manhunt* have come and gone in years gone by. Some games that have experimented with genres and pushed boundaries in acceptable ways have failed to sell, and gone straight to videogame heaven. Taking these risks, however, is something Terry Donovan believes is integral to the success of his company.

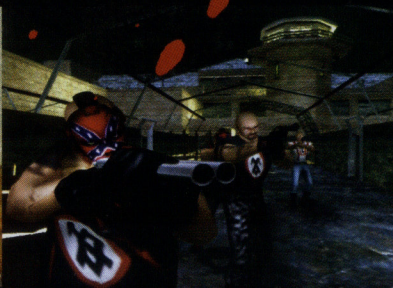
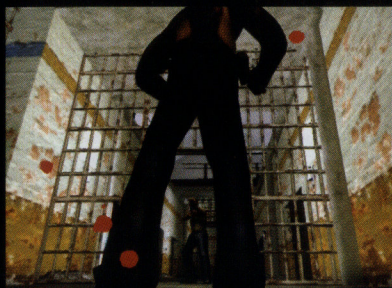
"For us, Rockstar has always been about taking risks. *GTA* was a risk. The original top-down with more-gameplay-than-graphics was a big risk. *GTA: London*, *Vice City* were risks. Who knew that a game set in the '80s, themed with pink neon could actually capture anybody's

imagination? *Midnight Club* and *Smuggler's Run* were risks at the launch of the PS2 – at a time when everybody else was doing sequels.

"People who spend that amount of money on games now aren't interested in being handed something packaged, shallow, weak or any of the above. I think they're the most critical entertainment audience on earth. They're more critical of games than they are of albums. They're more critical than they are of movies. But why wouldn't you be? It costs two or three times as much! So, for us, *Manhunt* is a totally different experience. We're very excited and very proud to show it to you."

What remains to be seen is how much polish and shine Rockstar North manage to get on the game. At this stage the game is graphically impressive, showcases superb elements and animations, and it will strike fear into any gamer's heart. *OPS2* will be the first in the country to review the game when it is released in Australia and we will definitely be keeping close tabs on how the game is shaping up between now and then. ■ **Richie Young**

* CAVEAT EMPTOR: LET THE BUYER BEWARE!



■ **KILLERS!** Can it be a true action game without Nazis?



TEAR IT UP!

The revolution is upon us. After four instalments of Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, developer Neversoft is shredding the rule book to create a new, streetwise version of its skateboarding sensation.

BOARD TRICK Don't like the plank design? Get in and change it

"With Tony Hawk's Underground we want to re-invent the videogame," smiles Scott Pease, producer of the latest Hawk's offering, its name abbreviated in keeping with its edgy ethos to THUG. Pease's claim represents a bold statement of intent born of Neversoft's desire to wrench the Tony Hawk's games back from the brink of serialised corporate repetitiveness and back into the world of cool.

Tony Hawk's Underground does away with the shackles of pro boarding, elevating every player to the status of hero and allowing more customisation than ever before. Joel Jewett, president of Neversoft, picks up the story, "Taking this approach is actually something we have wanted to do from the beginning... now is just the right time to change things thematically." In other words, Neversoft is getting a little tired of the Pro-Skater vibe, and is worried fans may be too.

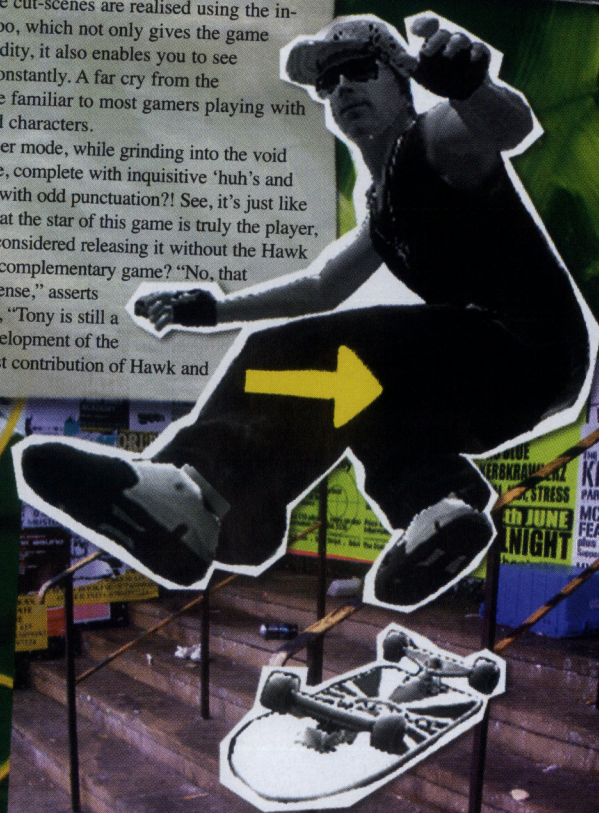
So who prompted this change in approach? "It was a collective decision," explains Tony Hawk himself, in an exclusive chat with OPS2. "We wanted to make a game that is more story driven and customisable. We also wanted it to go deeper into the skating experience of becoming a pro instead of simply starting as one."

It's true that the previous reliance on the big names meant that licensing restrictions limited Neversoft to presenting goals and activities that wouldn't harm the precious public image of brand names such as Tony Hawk. Now that you're the star, charged with creating your own legend, Neversoft can't stop you nicking cars and busting bad ass moves. In fact the cheeky swines love it when you get street.

The idea of progressing through the ranks has always been core to the gameplay in Hawk's - upgradeable boards, move lists and even characteristics formed the heart of the first titles. Now progression through the ranks

is far more literal as you play a kid scuffing his sneakers on the mean streets of Skatesville, USA. Your customised face will figure on the skater, built up using a vast skating identikit or, brilliantly enough, modelled on a picture of your face. All the cut-scenes are realised using the in-game graphics too, which not only gives the game an unbroken fluidity, it also enables you to see your character constantly. A far cry from the silhouetted figure familiar to most gamers playing with their own created characters.

Out goes career mode, while grinding into the void comes story mode, complete with inquisitive 'huh's and sentences ending with odd punctuation?! See, it's just like an RPG. Given that the star of this game is truly the player, surely Neversoft considered releasing it without the Hawk endorsement as a complementary game? "No, that would not make sense," asserts Jewett, explaining, "Tony is still a big part of the development of the game." The biggest contribution of Hawk and





his fellow pros was in the construction of the game's plot. Neversoft's scriptwriters didn't just rummage through cast-offs from episodes of early '90s sitcom *Dream On*, they interviewed loads of pro skaters and got their life stories (yawn). All the interesting bits were then extracted with tweezers and sewn into a rich tapestry of broken bones, scuffed egos and flamboyant trickery.

Of course, not every key moment in a skater's life is worthy of re-enactment in videogame form, eh Tony? "I'd rather they didn't include the time I got 'panted' in front of a big crowd, on the winner's podium after a big competition, underwear and all," reveals the man.

IF YOU WANNA BE CHAD MUSKA...

In real life, there's no single way to guarantee superstardom in the fickle, trend-led world of extreme sports. Your best bet is to start by being really good at skateboarding and then working up from there. *THUG* acknowledges that fact – your first mission goal is to strut your stuff and impress the visiting star, Chad Muska. He rolls up and watches you dance on your board like a pimp admiring his street-corner squeeze – all from the comfort of his hydraulically assisted bouncing car. For real.

In the real world, your career is usually kick-started by securing a generous sponsorship deal. Deals to promote decks are followed by footwear sponsorships and then, when you hit the big time, you'll get a salary. Ultimately, you'll achieve a level of world fame that will allow you to negotiate a 15-year deal with a major videogame publisher to endorse a string of games with your face plastered all over

'em... In *THUG*, your career will develop in much the same way. Take that first mission goal we mentioned, for instance – impress old Chad and he'll give you a new, gleaming board from the gods to replace your minging old one.

The first level of the game is set in New Jersey – "a kind of everytown," explains Jewett – where you start as a fresh-faced kid or craggy-faced manchild looking for a break. The reason for starting off your adventure in Jersey? Pease was recently quoted as saying because "it's kind of symbolic of the whole underground thing. I think that we are really going to stick, thematically, to the whole underground skate culture. We wanted to take it back to the street." It's certainly a location that couldn't be further from the sun-kissed, middle-class concrete of Los Angeles, the traditional inspiration for the *Hawk's* games.

So how does your skating life progress from there? "As you start on your career you'll hit new cities, hoping to hook up with sponsors who will bring you out to the West Coast," Pease tells *OPS2*, before hinting cagily at more exotic locations, "Eventually they'll send you on a worldwide tour." Neversoft is letting no secrets out about the non-US locales but Scott tells us, "We keep an eye on what fans online are talking about and wishing for," singling out www.thpsxonline.com as a "great online site". Currently topping that site's 'most wanted' location list is Barcelona, a hot tip for inclusion in *THUG*. It's likely that some kind of nuclear plant will feature in the final game, too.

Whatever the backdrops, the cities will not be peopled by a random population of passers-by. You'll receive most of your mission goals from folks relevant to the plot, otherwise you'll be asked to undertake tasks which fit into the scheme of things. Thus your ascent through the world of skating is charted before you. The first level is not just a stereotypically themed area, more a living, breathing neighbourhood complete with local cops, gang members and landmarks such as the school and skate shop. It's a microcosm of the towns and cities skaters across the globe bust up every day of the week.

It's clear that the switch to an underground theme for the game is not merely an attempt to revive a familiar videogame series, but a serious bid to make the gamer feel more engaged in the action, less distanced from the glittering world of pro skaters. We grill Tony Hawk about the edgy nature of some of the goals. "The game will represent many aspects of skating," he states, explaining that "not all are positive but each one will be a learning process".

It's in the flavour of the mission goals that the 'street' nature of *THUG* reveals itself. Aside from twee goals such as helping the police by removing a barricade that's blocking off half the level, you'll also hammer up posters for the local skate shop. And that's not all. One of the most astounding departures from the old formula is that you're now able to commandeer vehicles à la *Grand Theft Auto* and set off on *Driver*-style arrows and chase sequences.

DRIVING AMBITIONS

The car you nick is a typical retro roadster, which is just the tip of the vehicular iceberg. The inclusion of vehicles was not an end in itself, more a product of the team's desire to include race goals to vary the pace of gameplay in levels which typically don't feature clocks. Skateboards simply aren't ideal for racing.

Apparently, it's not just cars that you can commandeer, although Neversoft remains tight-lipped about the other vehicles that will take up

Today's louts are ruling the roost

space in its garage, referring only to "new wheels" when we grilled them, implying the much-touted inclusion of scooters or even motorbikes.

Grabbing vehicles is just one bi-product of the rider's new ability to step off the board and roam around the levels. That's the really big new thing in *THUG*. You can sprint around the levels in pursuit of extra points, secret areas and mission targets by walking or breaking into a full-on run. This is a game which fleshes out the lifestyle and evolution of the lead character - YOU. As a wannabe skate star you can now do as the pros do, sizing up the best lines and accessing new areas without having to catapult yourself into them like a madman glued to a wheel-bearing plank.

Aside from the game's goals, this gives you the chance to simply explore your surroundings. You can poke your nose through that crack in the fence to see if your neighbour's pool would make a good ramp. Or you can jump and catch ledges to pull yourself onto a roof and judge the curvature of a fallen tree before you come back later and perform an outrageous grind. At the most basic level, this will enable you to navigate slender passageways without the infuriating bumping associated with most skating games. Look out for the Lara/Snake-style shimmy across wires and ledges, too. This isn't just *Tony Hawk's* as RPG, it's also *Tony Hawk's* as an action adventure.

EVERYBODY'S FREE

"Getting off the board allows you to explore levels from a different perspective and reach places you otherwise could not," explains Pease with some passion, before going into more detail on the impact of cutting free from your plank. "Getting off your board has opened up a whole new set of transitional moves - caveman grinds, running acid drops - ways to go from running back to skating. They're very stylish and worth a lot of points."

In a behind-the-scenes showing of *Tony Hawk's Underground* at E3, OPS2 experienced first hand the fruits of Neversoft's labours in trying to ensure that the ability to walk and run became integrated into the point-pulling ethos of the game. As you hop off your board a little timer appears giving you a few seconds to re-position yourself without losing the trick multiplier that traditionally builds up by continuously daisy-chaining moves. Grind along a railing, for instance, and you can then skip across someone's lawn without breaking stride and then grind around their garden wall in one fluid movement.

If the guys at Neversoft think this development will be unanimously welcomed, at this stage they're wrong. After all, isn't the intensity of the near-flawless combos one of the factors that makes *Tony Hawk's* games so gripping? A lot will depend on whether falling off can be recovered by moving into a trot, which would decrease that sense of knife-edge peril so crucial to the game's appeal.

The control method for getting off your board is yet to be finalised. At the moment, hitting **[X]** and **[Y]** simultaneously does the trick. Hold down the jump button and you can then break into a run. Tap the jump button next to a vehicle and you can get behind the wheel. Once you pull off a trick of any flavour, you then jump back onto your board and

continue on your merry way.

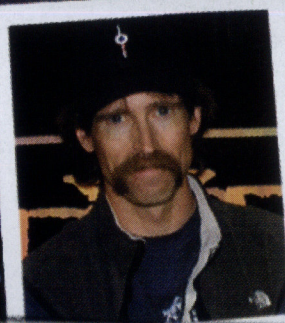
This freedom to easily navigate the levels on foot, taps into the ethos of empowerment. The customisability of *THUG* will far outstrip anything we've seen in a *Tony* game before, and by the looks of it, any other PS2 game you care to mention. You'll be able to fiddle with your park (see Go Create... A Park), create your own goals, your own tricks (see Go Create... A Trick) and even your own boards. As your fame grows and you land bigger sponsorship deals, you'll not simply have to make do with the current board the company is pedalling in the shops. Instead, the company will invite you to mark up your own set of wheels to give it a totally unique look. Rather than using a *Jet Set Radio*-style paint shop programme, you'll be able to merge and colour match a huge database of images and designs which are provided in the game's editor.

END GAME

The *Tony Hawk's* series has always pushed technology to its limits - even in its formative years back on PSone. Neversoft never develops a new *Tony* game without attempting to hurdle a few barriers. Having dipped its toe in the world-wide waters in *THPS4*, the guys are gunning for serious Internet play and massive online support. "We'll have eight players in a game at one time, with hundreds or thousands online at any given time," explains Pease.

Online play will be the cornerstone of unprecedented interactivity in *THUG*. "We're focusing on making the in-game content creation tools extremely robust so that wannabe game designers and hardcore fans can create their own parks, tricks and challenges, and play or trade them online or via memory cards," Pease enthuses. There'll also be the opportunity for players to rank their performance, which will not only show how good they are compared to other players in the world, but will give them the chance to line up against opponents of a similar skill level. "We hope to track all-time best combos and scores, and also bests of the month or week," adds Pease.

Ironically, Neversoft's biggest challenge to date is seemingly far more mundane - pitching the game's difficulty level. How do you satisfy gamers who have been playing *Tony Hawk's* for years, and busting one-million-



FLY DETECTOR

If all we're hearing is to be believed, Neversoft is making a down and dirty street mother of a game, but just how cool are the guys who've put it together? We plugged in Joel Jewett, president of Neversoft, to OPS2's very own cool-o-meter - we give you the Fly Detector...

Have you ever drunk a bottle of Jack Daniels and passed out in a club only to be awoken by the venue's cleaners the next morning?

"Have you ever split a few bottles of Mad Dog with your buddy, then driven him up the main street of your city while he rode on the roof of your car swinging a cross he swiped from the graveyard over his head, pretending he was Conan?"
Our Fly Detector says: Not so much fly as superfly!

Have you ever danced with a transvestite in the knowledge that 'she' was packing a little extra? "Them's fightin' words, boy..."
Our Fly Detector says: Whatever you say, sir

Have you ever dated a stripper?
"Wouldn't really call it 'dating'..."
Our Fly Detector says: Joel is one sexy manthing!

Which, if any, of these bands can be found in your CD collection? Colder, Gol Team,

Fat Truckers, Chicken Lips, The Rapture, LCD Soundsystem, Belle And Sebastian (not really) "Sorry, I am pretty much a Black Sabbath/Johnny Cash kinda guy."

Our Fly Detector says: More Austin than Hoxton

Have you ever appeared in home-made porn? "My life is pretty much undocumented."
Our Fly Detector says: That'll be a 'no' then

Have you ever strung a girl along by pretending you're a movie producer? "Didn't need to. I used to be a white-water river guide..."

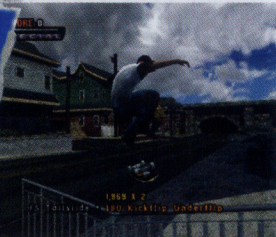
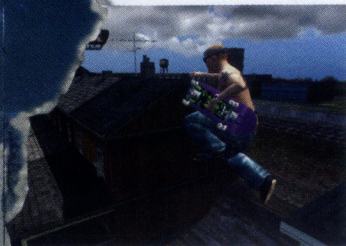
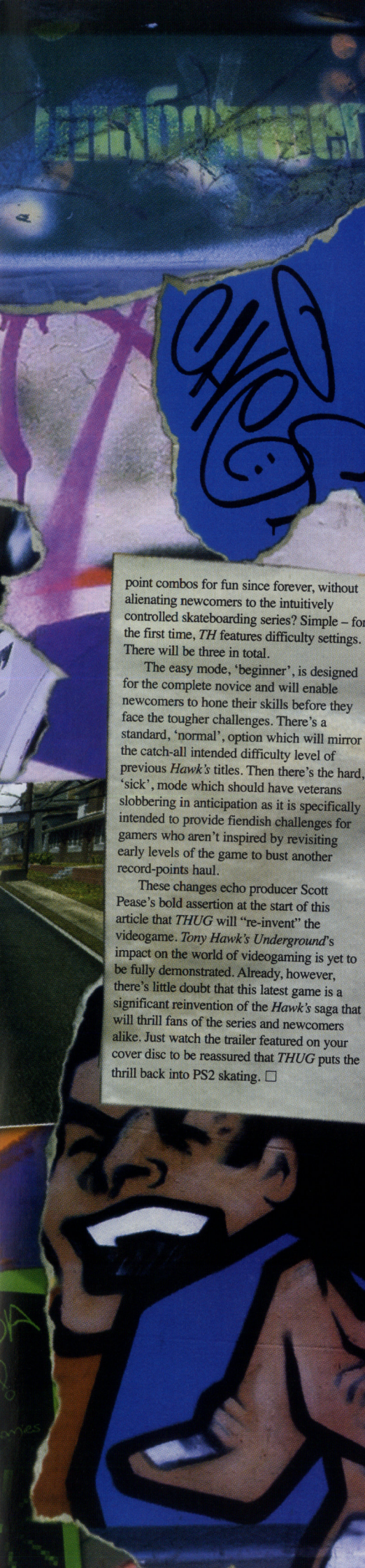
Our Fly Detector says: Doing it with desperate holidaymakers ain't fly, guy

OVERALL: There's no doubt Joel's one generally hip individual. He's passed our Fly Detector test comfortably, even if his knowledge of arty disco-punk bands lets him down. Lucky him.

Thursday June 5 2003

Camera catches cash thief

BUILD



■ **SIX APPEAL** Work your six-trick repertoire of customised moves into a record-breaking run



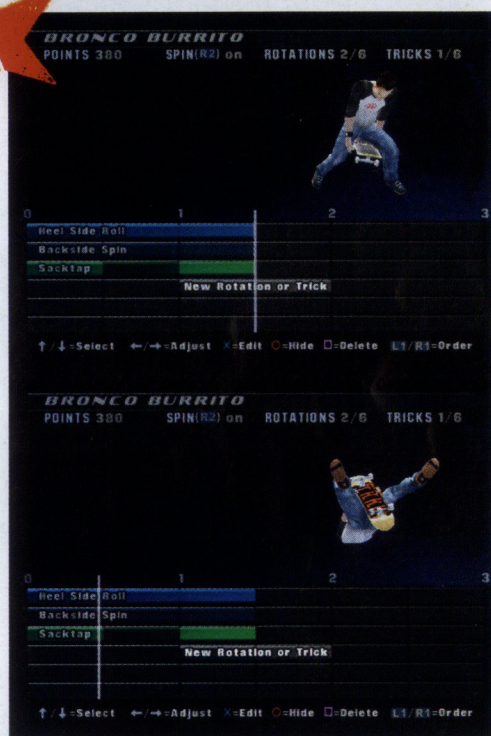
GO CREATE... A TRICK

The create-a-trick option is designed to be simple to use, and seamless in its realisation within the game. You develop tricks by melding elements of existing manoeuvres with flipping and spinning motions using an interface very similar to the timeline deployed in music creation games such as *Music 3000*. The resultant move can be the most outlandish vert trick ever, and it's easily hot-keyed onto your Joypad so you can pull it out for the big competitions.

Once you've edited a move, you can add it to your skater's trick roster, along with five other self-styled manoeuvres – enough to add a wholly personalised feel to any hardcore points run. The potential combinations may not be limitless but they certainly allow for most combos hardcore Hawkbees would hope to include, such as the previously absent kickflip Indy and kickflip to melon. Even if you're not an aficionado of obscure skating moves, the liberty of the system will make for an immersive element of interaction. "You can create some pretty wild air tricks," laughs Scott Pease, the game's producer, citing mental tricks such as "the inverted 900 Christ air backflip".

Pease explains the parameters involved. "You can combine and blend up to six different animations and six different body rotations and you have complete control over the time line of the trick." The limit is only designed to keep your efforts within the realms of the possible in terms of the game engine.

The developer is also including a string of poses and little animations that do not feature in existing moves so you can freestyle. You will even be able to edit the set-piece manoeuvres themselves to ensure that each animation flows smoothly into the next by snipping the front and back off certain moves. Best of all, the game will calculate a score to attribute to the move based on the difficulty of pulling it off, so there's no room for cheating online or even on your own. You'll even be able to upload your trick to Neversoft's website so other gamers can try out your moves.



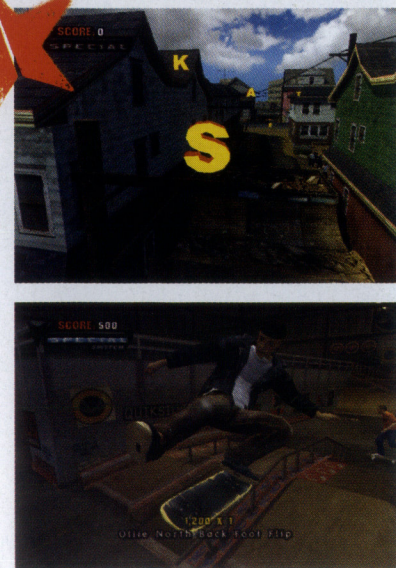
GO CREATE... A PARK

In earlier *Tony Hawk's* games you could only apply gap names to your edited parks. Now the evolution of the homemade park is truly complete. As well as being able to place S-K-A-T-E (see above) and C-O-M-B-O letters anywhere you wish, you can allocate high-score targets, combo targets, specific trick goals and place collectable objects. Naturally, naming gaps and attributing a score to them is also feasible.

"We've been working on some improvements to allow bigger parks – you can practically build your very own city," explains Scott Pease, *THUG's* developer. "You can also copy and paste large sections of your park." Pease then teases us by promising, "You can place animated people who give out goals, some of which can even involve other modes of transportation." You'll also be able to add level goals to the locales that form the crux of the story mode, making *THUG* an almost infinitely replayable experience.

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of the new customisability of *THUG's* levels is that you can share them online. Downloading parks created by other gamers – and the Neversoft crew itself – will be easy enough as each one is only 30k in size, so you'll be able to squeeze a board-spinning 270 parks onto a single, standard 8Mb memory card. Despite that fact, the parks are far bigger than those you will have seen before, even in *THPS4*.

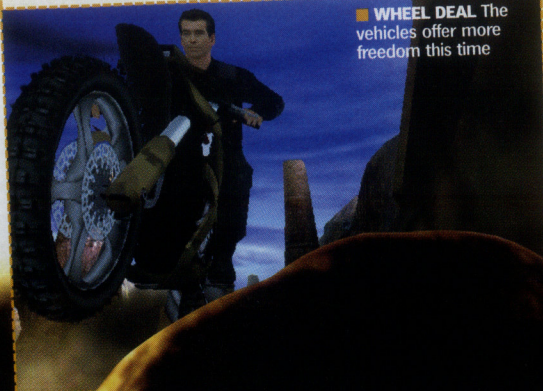
The onus on developing new content will not be on Neversoft, according to Pease, who asserts, "We'll be looking to the fans to provide that." He continues, "With *THPS4*, we already have a community of really skilled park builders who have constructed some kick-ass levels. With the new tools in *Tony Hawk's Underground*, they're going to be able to take it way further, even creating their own custom career modes that can span several levels and include up to 100 or more goals." It sounds, to coin a somewhat passe skater phrase, awesome.



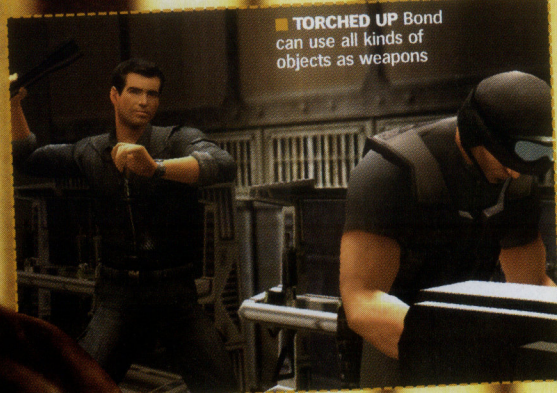
■ **HAIR PLAY** Customise your skater so that he looks 'cool'

JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING

It's the first Bond game on PS2 worth getting shaken up about. Mix yourself a stiff one while we run through the 007 reasons why you're going to want Everything Or Nothing even more than a night with Halle Berry



■ **WHEEL DEAL** The vehicles offer more freedom this time



■ **TORCHED UP** Bond can use all kinds of objects as weapons

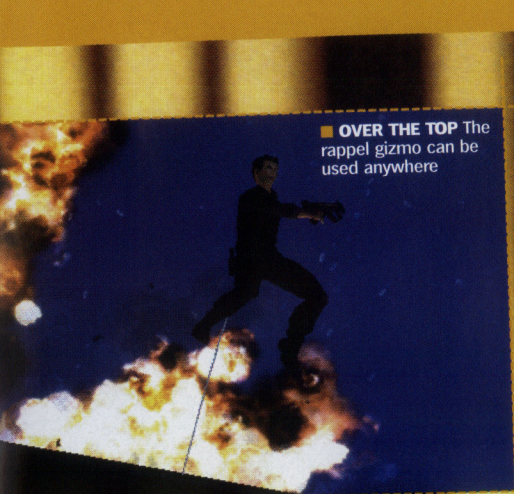


"The name's Bond. James Bond." That should be enough. But for anyone who needs reminding, here are seven reasons why 007 is the single coolest man to ever come out of the English isles...

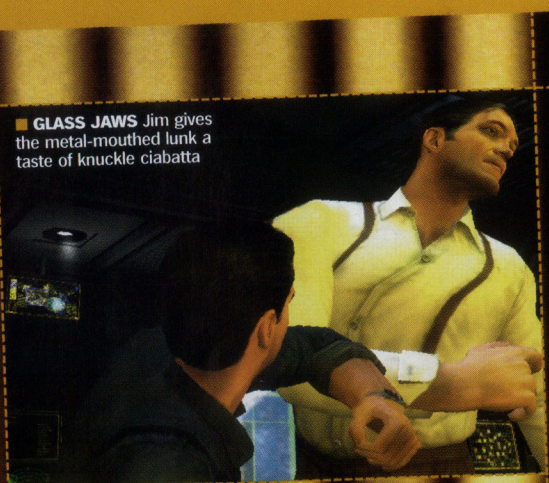
1. Bond can unzip an Olympic skater's dress using his watch while ordering an airstrike with his lighter. Still think your phone is cutting edge?
2. Make a list of the ten most beautiful women in the world. Bond's had half of them, right?
3. Bond tucks his shirt into his trousers with a single, flowing motion that doesn't leave any creases. Classy women love that kind of thing.
4. He doesn't use a big gun because he's not trying to prove anything in the trouser department. Plus, a concealed Walther P99 won't spoil the cut of his suit.
5. In the casino, Bond heads straight for the baccarat. Unlike roulette, it's a man's game and he never, ever loses. Even after drinking enough vodka martinis to down a rhino.
6. Regardless of how startlingly attractive they are, Bond never sends his old girlfriends drunken text messages begging them to come over for a 'chat'.
7. Did we mention that he's not an American?

WORDS: TIM CLARK

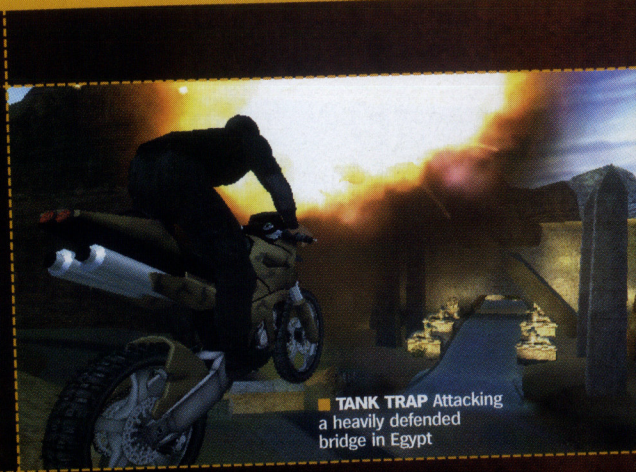
...I THINK HE'S ATT



■ **OVER THE TOP** The rappel gizmo can be used anywhere



■ **GLASS JAWS** Jim gives the metal-mouthed lunk a taste of knuckle ciabatta



■ **TANK TRAP** Attacking a heavily defended bridge in Egypt



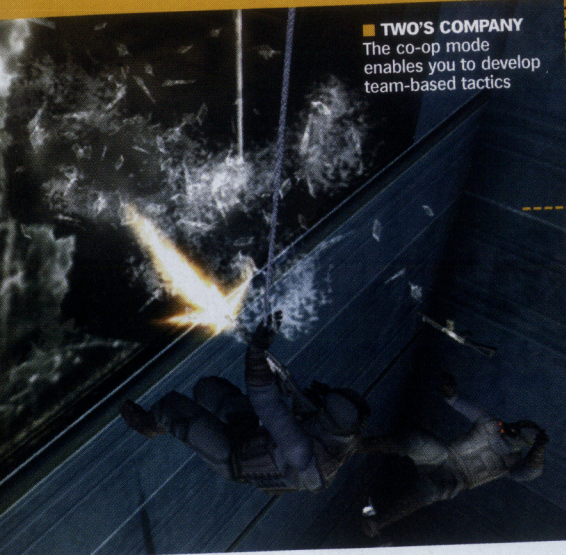
So, he's devastatingly suave, utterly ruthless and cooler than a liquid nitrogen Slush Puppy. Which counts for precisely nothing when all you can see is Jimbo's hand bobbing around on the screen. The suit might be rakishly tailored and his nails immaculately manicured, but you could be playing as a cocktail waiter and still be none the wiser. That's why the mantra for this year's model is: "see Bond, be Bond." (See what they've done there?) EA has decided to dump the first-person shooter genre, having understandably grown tired of reviewers merrily battering its 007 games for the crime of not being *GoldenEye*. And having stumped up an undisclosed (but presumably enormous) fee to use Pierce Brosnan's likeness, it would have been madness – madness, we say! – to confine those A-list checkbones to the cut-scenes.

Everything Or Nothing is played almost entirely from a third-person perspective, enabling you to see Bond as he outfoxes power-crazed psychos and deflowers naive double agents. Makes your heart swell with pride, doesn't it? But it also means that, for the first time, Bond will be judged against gaming's own action heroes. And the likes of Sam Fisher and Solid Snake aren't exactly easy-pickings, even for an oversexed super spy. Time to find out what's hiding up those perfectly-tailored trousers... ➔

EMPTYING RE-ENTRY

JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING

■ **TWO'S COMPANY**
The co-op mode enables you to develop team-based tactics



■ **VANTASTIC**
Great for thwarting super villains and the school run

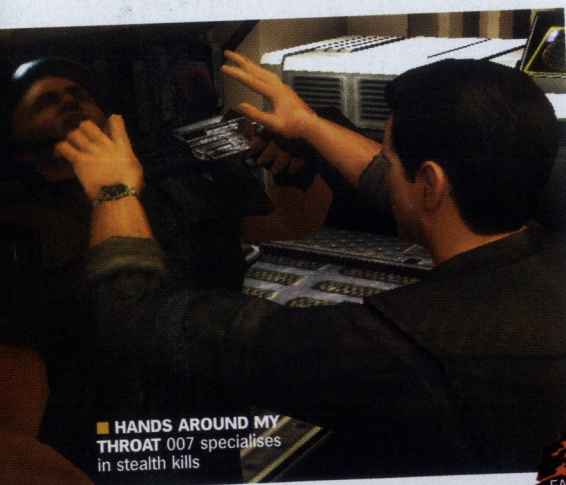


→ 001

CHRISTMAS COMES TWICE
Fancy slipping into action with another agent?

International espionage doesn't have to be a lonely life with an unmarked grave waiting for you at the end. *EON* features a co-operative mode in which – instead of being Bond – both players take the role of trainee M16 agents. The mode uses a dynamic split-screen technique, meaning that when you're near to your chum, the dividing line will disappear. The beauty of co-op is the chance to develop your own tactics, such as using your partner to provide covering fire from a vantage point or leading enemies into traps.

Sociable spies will also be chuffed to learn that *EON* features a four-player, arena-based deathmatch mode. Hopefully featuring environmental hazards like shark pools, bubbling magma and teetering stacks of unsold Grace Jones albums.



■ **HANDS AROUND MY THROAT** 007 specialises in stealth kills

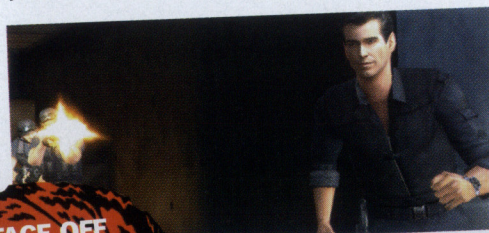
002

ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD
EON uses a flashy bullet time effect... wait, come back!

There's more to being "Bond than shooting henchman and sipping cocktails", explains producer Scott Bandy. "To become Her Majesty's finest you're going to have to start thinking like 007. Bond thinks faster than anybody else." But the difficulty is reflecting this in terms of gameplay. "One approach is the Bond zone," says Bandy. "It gives you time to think by slowing the game down using a technique similar to bullet time." Sorry, the what zone? "It's not really about dodging bullets like *The Matrix*," he counters. "It's about having a moment to think in a more sophisticated way."

The idea is that in a stealth situation there will be several ways around the obstacle. When Bond goes into the zone – cue swooshy effects – it gives you time to consider your options: do you rush the guard, trigger a diversion or find an alternate route? It's still very much work-in-progress, and the development team is considering using different visual cues to lead less-experienced players towards possible solutions.

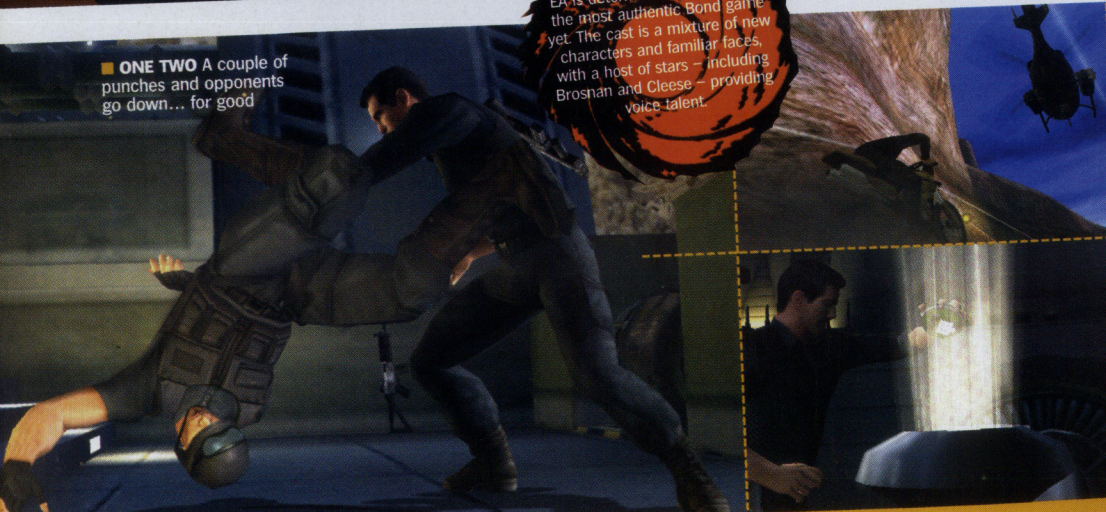
Of course, you can use it to waltz between bullets too. "Bond is so freakin' lucky!" shouts Bandy. "He walks into a room with 50 guys armed with machine guns and doesn't get hit once. Because he's lucky!" How long you can spend in the zone is dependant on a rechargeable meter. The more stealthily you play and the more brinkmanship you engage in, the more the ability will be pumped up," explains Bandy. It's an interesting addition to the gameplay dynamic and, thankfully, the name is only a placeholder. Change it or you'll have an international incident on your hands.



FACE OFF

EA is determined to make *EON* the most authentic Bond game yet. The cast is a mixture of new characters and familiar faces, with a host of stars – including Brosnan and Cleese – providing voice talent.

■ **ONE TWO** A couple of punches and opponents go down... for good



■ **TACTICAL WITHDRAWAL**
Knowing when to retreat and recuperate is vital



■ **SUPER BIKE** This beauty is loaded with high-tech munitions

003

KILLER CARS

We shake down Bond's Fritz-engineered SUV in *OPS2*'s first road test, kind of. The things we suffer...

One of the vehicles that Bond commandeers during the game is a Q-enhanced, rocket-equipped Porsche Cayenne Turbo. It's the legendary German manufacturer's first ever SUV and there's currently a lengthy waiting list of prospective owners. The virtual version isn't ready for testing yet so we decided to take the real thing for a spin.

Strangely, the man at the showroom didn't believe we had the \$200,000 required to join the queue. So we sent Dad instead...

OPS2: What's it like to drive, then?

DAD: Like Guinness laced with Tia Maria – it's smooth, powerful and utterly intoxicating.

OPS2: Jesus Dad, how long did it take you to come up with that? Is it fast?

DAD: The water-cooled V8 engine can do 0-60 in five and a half seconds, maxing out at a top speed of 265kmph. You completely command the road. It's like driving a very big sports car.

OPS2: But does it make you feel like James Bond on a deadly mission?

DAD: Not really. I feel more like Blofeld. The inside is very roomy and has a plush leather finish – like an expensive saloon car.

OPS2: How about if Halle Berry was sitting next to you in a flimsy cocktail dress?

DAD: Yeah, that would help.

OPS2: Ask the Porsche bloke how much it is to have machine guns fitted?

DAD: He says sat-nav comes as standard but guns aren't a factory option.



004

SOD ODD JOB!

...and Jaws is too obvious. Check out our rogue's gallery for some potentially killer cameos

No, your eyes aren't broken – that really is Jaws in the screenshots dusted lightly around the opposite page. Thanks to a recent deal between the two companies, EA is allowed to use classic characters from all 20 of MGM's 007 films. It's undecided as to whether we'll be able to kill any of the old-timers but here's a hastily compiled list of the vintage villains we want in the game.

METAL MICKEY

EA's plot centres on the threat posed by nano-technology. You know, those little widgets the Borg use to assimilate people? But they're just tiny little robots, what possible, possible harm could they do?



MR WINT AND MR KIDD (DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER)

Wint and Kidd were spectacularly camp, utterly conscienceless hitmen in the pay of Blofeld. They specialised in killing their victims in an imaginative way (like, cheers) and habitually finished each other's sentences. If you're in any doubt as to how close Wint and Kidd's working relationship was, the pair were seen holding hands after blowing up a chopper. Oh, do behave...

LAST SCENE: Having detected his pungent cologne, Bond detonates Wint using his own cake-cum-bomb device. Kidd is set on fire and jumps overboard.



HUGO DRAX (MOONRAKER)

"Mr Bond, you persist in defying my efforts to provide an amusing death for you." Drax is the quintessential Bond villain due to the ludicrousness and stratospheric expense involved in his scheme. He planned to nerve gas Earth from orbit and then repopulate the planet using only intelligent, attractive people... is that really so wrong? Well is it? Yeah, it probably is.

LAST SCENE: Bond shoots Drax with one of Q's wrist darts, forcing him into an airlock, looking quite startled. As you would.



BARON SAMEDI (LIVE AND LET DIE)

Despite masquerading as the voodoo god of the undead, the Baron always had a smile on his face. Probably due to the ready availability of top-notch smack. Baron Samedi also enjoyed scaring the local girls with his big snake – Jane Seymour could scarcely hide her excitement.

LAST SCENE: Being thrown into a snake-filled coffin. Laughing boy re-appears just before the credits roll, sitting on the front of a train. Mwa ha ha!



MAX ZORIN (A VIEW TO A KILL)

Need a boggle-eyed megalomaniac? You could do a lot worse than call Christopher Walken. Zorin planned to destroy Silicon Valley with a devastating earthquake, thus giving him total control of the global market in computer chips. Currently still on Bill Gates's 'to do' list.

LAST SCENE: Falling to his death from the top of San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge.

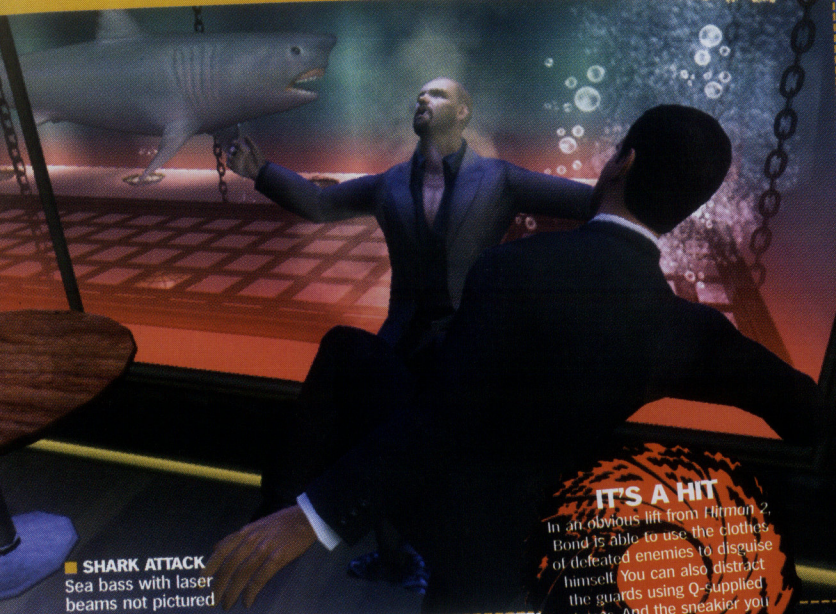


BAMBI AND THUMPER (DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER)

Bond is searching Willard Whyte's mansion when he's confronted by these athletic beauties. The girls proceed to kick his ass in an acrobatic, some might say arousing, manner. Bond triumphs by chucking them both in the swimming pool.

LAST SCENE: The girls only featured in the one scene, which – quite frankly – is a crying shame.

JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING



■ **SHARK ATTACK**
Sea bass with laser beams not pictured

■ **LICENSED TO THRILL**
It's easily the most cinematic Bond game



IT'S A HIT
In an obvious lift from *Filmmen 2*, Bond is able to use the clothes of defeated enemies to disguise himself. You can also distract the guards using Q-supplied gizmos. And the sneakier you play, the more you will be rewarded with enhanced gadgetry.

→ 005

AUTO EROTICA

Because James Bond just doesn't do public transport

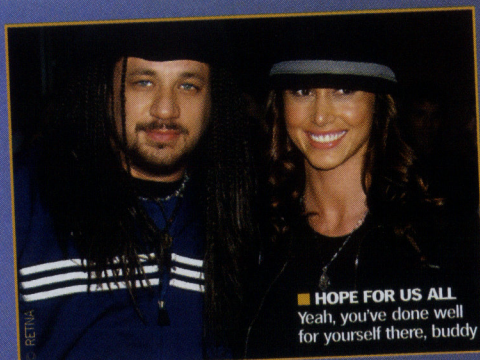
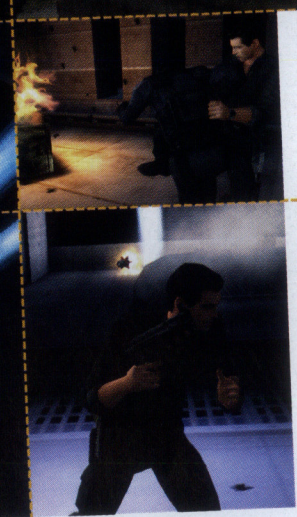
It wouldn't be a Bond game without the chance to reduce flashy status symbols to smouldering wrecks. Vehicle-based action comprises about 40% of the gameplay in *EON*. In one sequence Bond takes the wheel of a rocket-equipped Porsche Cayenne in pursuit of a heavily-armoured train, while elsewhere he pilots a helicopter through Egypt's Valley Of The Kings and pops endos on a Triumph trail bike.

Naturally, the civilian vehicles come bristling with high-tech munitions but the finale sees Bond marauding through Moscow's Red Square in a tank. Powering these sections is a modified version of the engine that's also under the bonnet of the forthcoming *Need For Speed Underground*.

Want more good news? Unlike *NightFire*, only one of *EON*'s missions is on-rails. "This time we're hoping to do something that's more like being in a movie," says Bandy. "It's a unified experience with fully integrated gameplay, so the illusion never breaks." The plan being for seamless transitions between on-foot and driving sections. The game even uses cut-scenes to mask loading times – meaning you'll never sit there twiddling your sticks, waiting for the next section to cook up.



■ **HANGING OUT**
Surveying the glorious visuals from on high



■ **HOPE FOR US ALL**
Yeah, you've done well for yourself there, buddy

006

ELIZABETH, MY DEAR

American Pie's denuded exchange student provides the eye candy in *EON*

In the lady department, EA has signed up Shannon Elizabeth, the first digital Bond girl to be played by a real you-can-touch-her-and-everything actress. The glimpse of Shazza wearing a silver chiffon dress in the trailer suggests it's a smart move. Incidentally, that hairy lump pictured above actually gets to introduce her as 'the old ball and chain'. For he is Joe Reitan, hereafter known as Lucky. The couple met at acting class in 1996 and were married last year. Lucky once did a stint as Johnny Vaughn's Hollywood correspondent on *The Big Breakfast* and also starred in a film called *Bum Runner*. He presumably now spends every waking moment making sweet, sweet love. Romantic it might be but, we ask you, is this justice?

007

A PIERCE OF THE ACTION

Finally, here's the hands-on debriefing

Following a superbly bombastic opening, we're thrown straight into action. Bond is rappelling over the edge of an exploding skyscraper but there's no time to admire the stunning visuals – translucent searchlights, billowing smoke – while hurtling down the side. Blasts rock the building and shatter windows as guards absell down.

We ventilate the henchmen using a sub-machine gun and their bodies hang at the end of the rope. Licensed to kill, baby. Back on solid ground, we neutralise the guards using hand-to-hand combat. Unlike most third-person action heroes, Bond can handle himself without a piece, knocking opponents spark out with a couple of punches. And once down, they don't get back up.

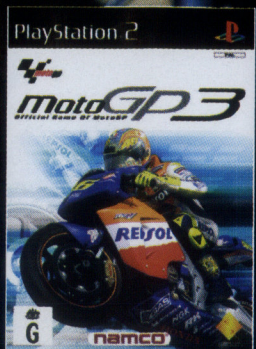
The resemblance to Brosnan really is uncanny, and if you use stealth, 007 will even tap a guard on the shoulder before sticking his rifle butt in. Having planted a bomb we dive off another ledge using the automatically-activated rappel. Landing on the next platform we're greeted by heavy resistance. The targeting system – which tracks enemies before you lock on to them – feels twitchy at first but soon becomes second nature.

Bond automatically makes use of cover, enabling you to duck out and return fire with ease. Confronted by bazooka-toting guards we activate Bond zone, slowing time to a crawl. But despite the temporal shenanigans, Bond still takes a rocket to the face, and survives. Which looks plain wrong – but it is work in progress...

Our first taste of Bond's new direction has left previously stiff upper lips trembling with excitement.



Pussy.



SPEED RULES

Forget fancy handlebars and namby-pamby chromework. Nerve-shredding racing around 15 courses with the world's fastest riders is what you need. Along with a 2 player grand prix mode and a 4 player option using a multitap* to make your friends' eyeballs bleed. Plus there's the ultra-realistic on-board view and independent front and rear braking. Handy for any big girl's blouses out there.

namco

au.playstation.com

THE EXCITING PLACE THE COMPETITIVE PLACE THE THIRD PLACE



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REVIEWS

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to you by

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REVIEW CHARTER

FACT: OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE's reviews are the best in the business. Our crack squad of reviewers play the games longer, harder and better than anyone else. And we absolutely love what we do.

It's this dedication that means you can trust our scores above anyone else's. Whether a game's superb or sewage, our experts will tell it like it is with buckets of opinion rather than a few cheap gags and some PR nonsense. Our experienced reviewers have written for the game industry's most revered publications, both here and overseas. What's more, our writers have plenty of 'heritage' in the industry, having a collective history spanning into decades. Rest assured that these are opinions you can trust.

Next time you head off to spend your hard-earned cash on a PlayStation 2 game, make sure you read our reviews first.

REVIEW RATINGS

HERE'S WHAT OUR REVIEW SCORES STAND FOR:

- 10/10** Nigh on revolutionary. A game that could change the face of gaming forever
- 09/10** A truly astonishing game. If you have a PlayStation 2, you need this now
- 08/10** Highly recommended
- 07/10** Good, solid fare that's definitely well worth a look
- 06/10** Better than average, and ideal for hardcore fans of the genre
- 05/10** An average game
- 04/10** Poor, but still with the odd moment
- 03/10** Extremely disappointing
- 02/10** To be avoided
- 01/10** Beer mat

THE OPS2 AWARDS

We don't hand out high scores for nothing so when you see one of these, you'll know it's a sign of quality. Look for them on game boxes.

GOLD
PlayStation 2

The Gold Award is a rare gem and only to be given to PS2 games that score that magic 10/10. The only game to get Gold is MGS2. Too right!

SILVER
PlayStation 2

The Silver Award is for games that receive 9/10. If you see this, it's a sign of star quality, indicating that you should buy this game now!

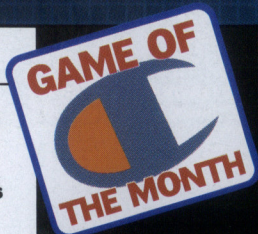
BRONZE
PlayStation 2

The Bronze Award is for games that score 8/10. These games are highly recommended and are 100% guaranteed to satisfy.

DVD / MUSIC / MEDIA
media

DVD RELEASES.....078

Insomnia / One Hour Photo / Solaris / Catch Me if You Can / Ministry of Sound



AFL LIVE 2004.....056

Acclaim lines up for another goal kick...

MACE GRIFFIN: BOUNTY HUNTER.....060

Trigger-happy hokum or flight of fancy? Er, both actually

DEAD TO RIGHTS.....062

Join us for a dog day afternoon on the mean streets of Grant City

STARSKY & HUTCH.....064

Fruit stall owners and cardboard box stackers beware, Starsky & Hutch are back!

065 ATV OFFROAD FURY 2

066 MUSIC 3000

068 DARK CHRONICLE

069 DIE HARD VENDETTA

070 FORMULA ONE 2003

072 RTX RED ROCK

073 SUMMER HEAT BEACH VOLLEYBALL

074 INDIANA JONES AND THE EMPEROR'S TOMB

075 FINDING NEMO

075 SX SUPERSTAR

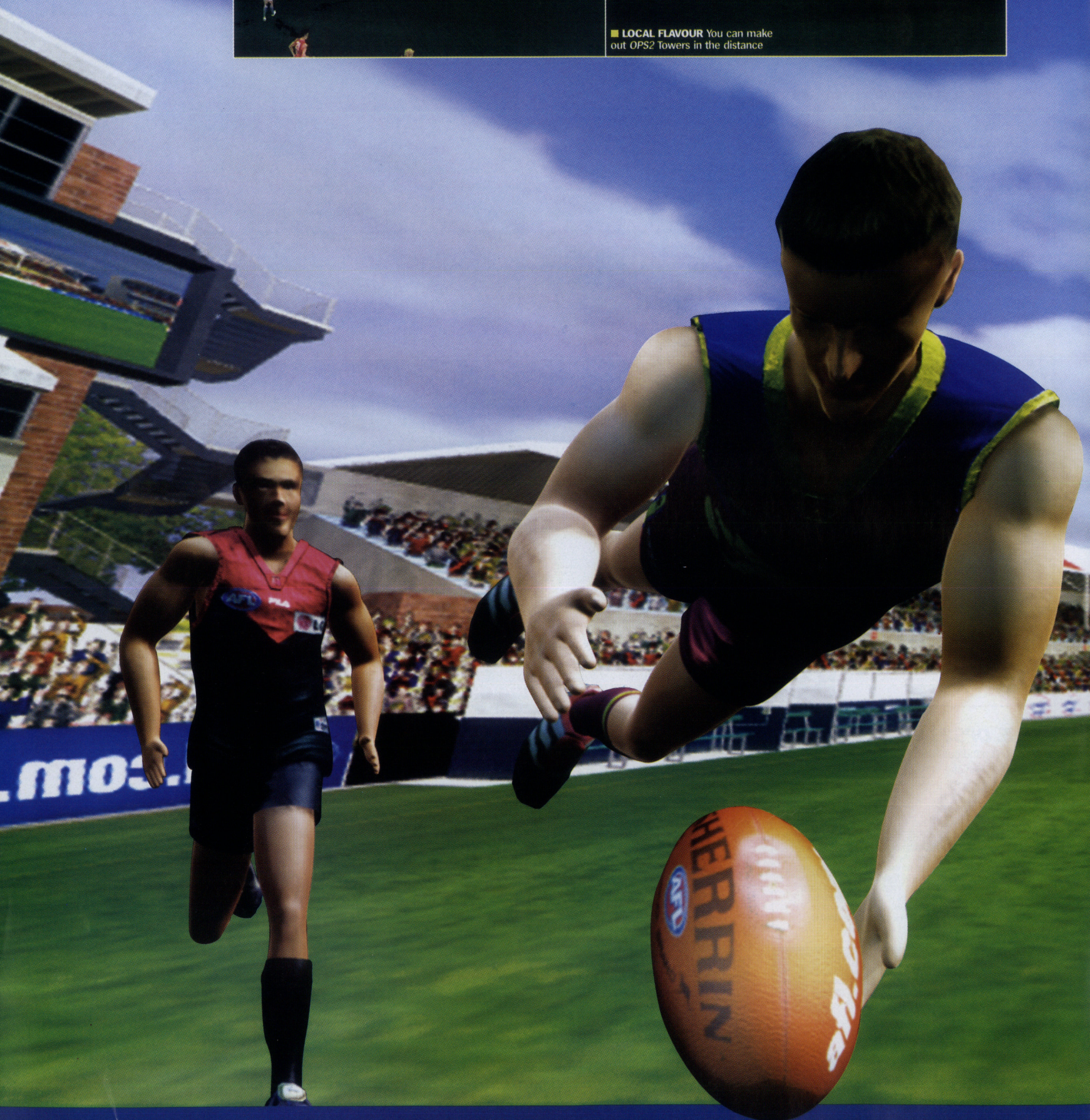
076 FUTURAMA

077 BLACK AND BRUISED



REVIEW

AFL LIVE 2004



It takes a little more to make a

AFL LIVE 2004

Acclaim lines up for another goal kick...

PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM
DEVELOPER: IR GURUS
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 2
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE:
WWW.ACCLAIMAU.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: YES
SURROUND SOUND: NO



■ BACK STORY

Acclaim has the AFL licence for four years. Their first effort, Kevin Sheedy's AFL Coach 2002, was a PC management title guaranteed to cure insomnia. AFL Live 2003 was a superior game, but still a little rough around the edges.



You might have to be mad to play it, and you certainly have to be madly one-eyed to support your team, but our great game is something special. Whether you're on the back of an opponent taking a screamer or sitting in the stands singing your club song, footy is a way of life for countless Aussies.

Acclaim's Australian Rules debut last year was good enough to be a must-buy for footy fans, but not flashy or deep enough to compete with the big budget sport simulations that EA churn out with alarming regularity. This year's sequel repeats the dose. It offers plenty of improvements, but still falls a long way short when you compare it to the big-budget competitors from other codes like FIFA or Pro Evolution Soccer.

KICKING AND SCREAMING

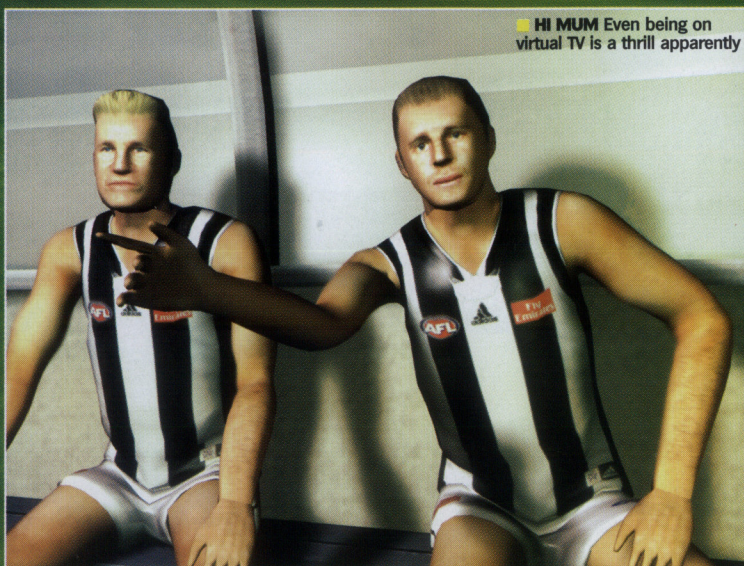
The biggest improvement is the addition of extra kicks like stab passes, chips, grubbers, snaps and booming torpedos. In last year's game the ball always followed the same trajectory, but now more realistic ball physics are used and you have greater control over your kicks. Wind also plays a big part in kicking for goal. The new kicks make it easier to take advantage of the reasonably sharp intelligence of your team-mates and hit their chest when they find space. Team-mates are always trying to offer leads, and faster players now have a considerably bigger advantage over their opponents in getting free. Near the big sticks, snaps and torpedoes are incredibly satisfying and will have you

cheering along with the crowd as you kick a spectacular goal. The more precise kicking game also makes defence a little tougher - it can be difficult to turn the ball over when the opposition is rampant, especially on the highest difficulty setting.

The marking system in 2004 is also improved, with a more responsive feel. There are 13 different high-flying "speckles" to pull off, which prove to be a lot of fun, even if it's your opponent getting the big air. Sometimes the animations are unintentionally amusing, with players launching off the backs of non-existent rivals, but generally the spectacular marks add to the enjoyment and provide a unique Aussie Rules flavour to the game. We also like the new one-two handballs, which can baffle opponents and help set up lots of space to run into.

BIGGER AND BETTER

Depth was a major problem in the 2003 edition, and Melbourne-based developer has obviously tried to offer more play options to keep you interested. Training drills in areas like goal kicking, tackling and marking prove welcome additions, especially for newcomers. There are also mini games that prove fun with a friend (see Mini Me). Missions are also a great idea, with 16 historical games to play with various amounts of time left on the clock. You can try and get Geelong over the line against Hawthorn in the classic '89 Grand Final, re-enact Carlton's glorious comeback against the Pies in 1970, or choose the Bulldogs and grimly hold onto the lead in that memorable '97 Preliminary Final against Adelaide. Unfortunately, licensing restrictions mean that you have to play →



■ HI MUM Even being on virtual TV is a thrill apparently



■ DEATH STAR? Nah, the icon's actually a directional aid

REVIEW

AFL LIVE 2004



→ with today's teams instead of yesteryear's heroes. Acclaim would have to sign each past player individually, which means we'll never get to play with past legends of the sport – a big disappointment. Fictional missions and the ability to create your own scenarios offer little compensation. But players will enjoy the Wizard Cup mode, which comes complete with the six wacky new rules like "super goal" nine pointers and three points for a rushed behind.

Improved tactical options and more statistics also help to boost the appeal of slogging through multiple premiership seasons. Players can choose from their club's full 42-member squad in the team setup screen, and player statistics are shown in areas like marking, kicking, speed, stamina and height. Cleverly, the stats of the player's direct opponent are also displayed, ensuring you can get the best match ups all over the ground. After the siren, the match's best players are awarded votes for a mock Brownlow medal, and the leading goal scorers are shown in a Coleman Medal table. There's also the leading players in kicks, handballs, disposals, tackles and hit-outs, and even club best and fairest awards. Meanwhile, every time you play, a Player Profile tracks your success with information like your number of wins, losses, goals, behinds and your longest kick for

goal. The stats prove valuable incentives to keep playing and were sorely missed in last year's game, although we'd still like options like player drafts and the ability to formulate set plays.

Other new additions include arenas like Optus Oval and Shell Stadium, as well as a suburban training ground, plus new animations, instant replays and improved commentary. Your commentators are now Denis Cometti and Gerard Healy, with Christi Malthouse as boundary rider, which is a clever addition that works well. The trio often get it wrong, but the banter is less wooden and sterile than last year's effort. Individual teams now actually play to their strengths and have different styles of play. Some teams play a hard tackling game, others concentrate on running the ball and using lots of handball, while others favour a long kicking approach.

MISSED IT BY THAT MUCH...

Unfortunately, what tends to limit lasting appeal, despite the developer's best intentions to inject new play modes and stats, is simply the game itself. Like last year's edition, results are too often determined by who can get the ball out of the centre and boot it to their full forward. The addition of the new snap kick just makes it even

easier for the ruckman to grab the ball and quickly bomb it to your eager forwards. On even the hardest difficulty setting, you can repeat this tactic ad infinitum against most opponents.

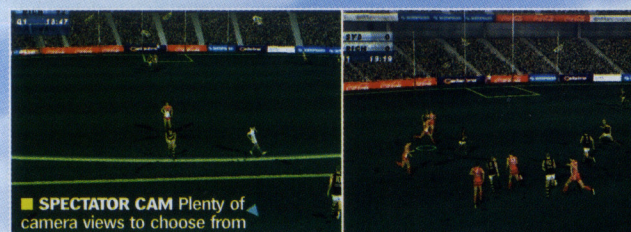
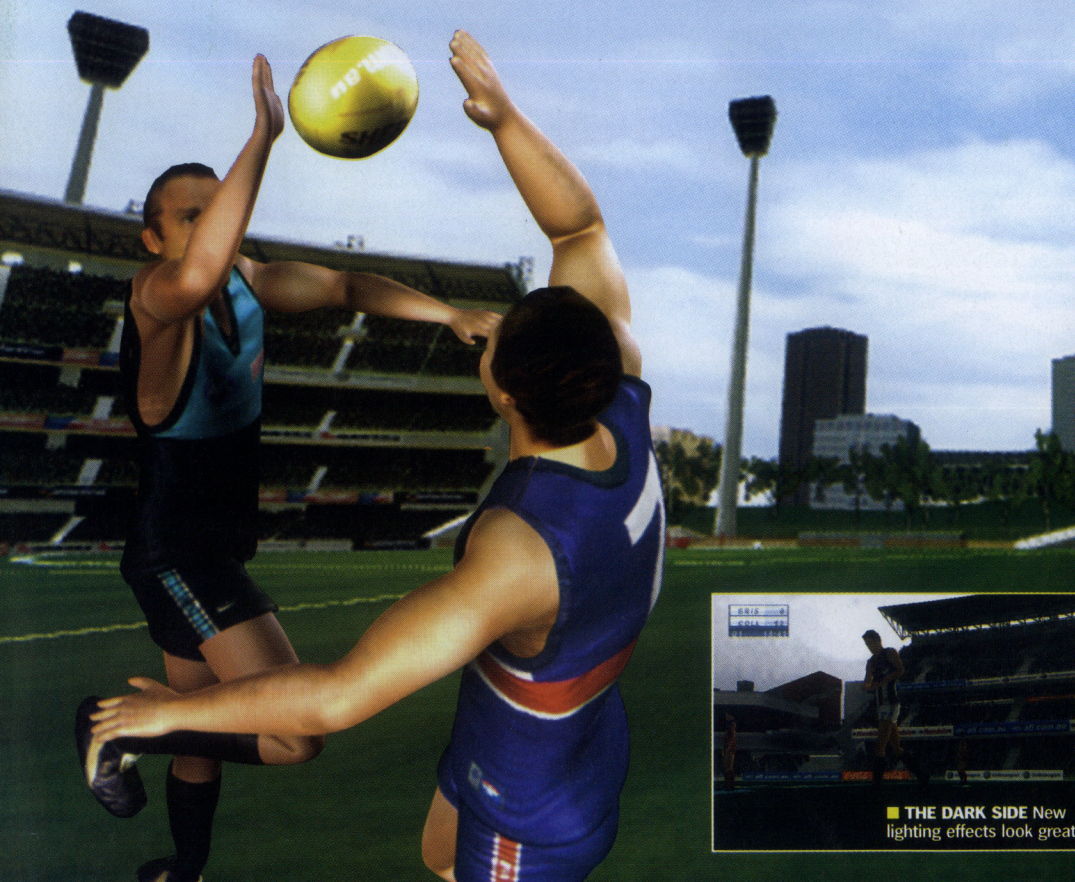
Australia's unique game is more like a religion than a sport to countless fans, so we suspect that many devotees will be happy with this new game. It's not a screamer, but is certainly superior to its predecessor, with some solid improvements that add to long-term appeal. If you didn't grab a copy of its predecessor and spend most weekends in the outer with a pie in your hand and a beanie on your head, consider AFL Live 2004 an essential purchase. But if you already own last year's game, the new additions might not be enough to get you playing again. ■ Jason Hill

OFFICIAL VERDICT

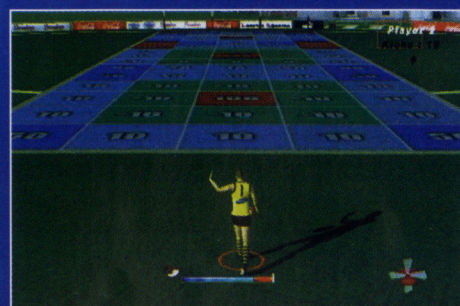
Graphics	06	Reasonable stadiums and player animation
Sound	06	Better commentary but atmosphere still lacking
Gameplay	08	Loads of fun, whether alone or with mates
Life span	06	More tactical depth might have improved things

Plays a better game of footy, but it's not a vast improvement over its predecessor.

06



MINI ME



AFL Live 2004 features mini games for testing your skills. All can be played against a mate, and although they have very limited appeal, beating your best scores is addictive. Superkick sees players trying to pinpoint kicks onto a grid, with each square offering a different score. Handball Challenge is a variation on the handball competitions popular on Sunday morning footy shows, with a revolving target and a strict time limit. Around the World is the most fun, letting players have a series of set shots for goal from around the 50m arc. Wind plays a big part in the success of your kicks though.

It takes a little more to make a **Champion**

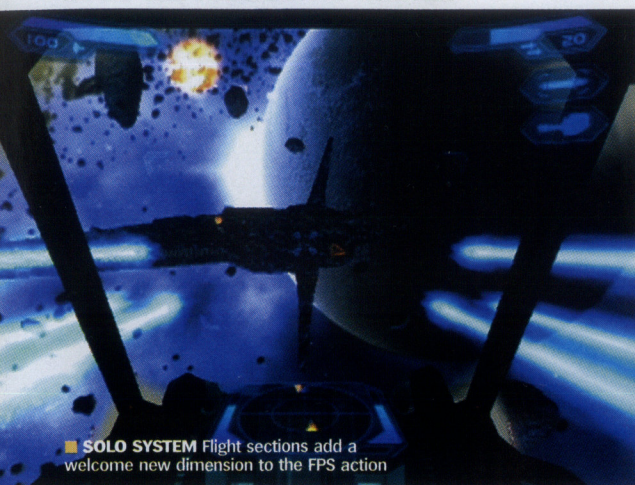


Play where you want.

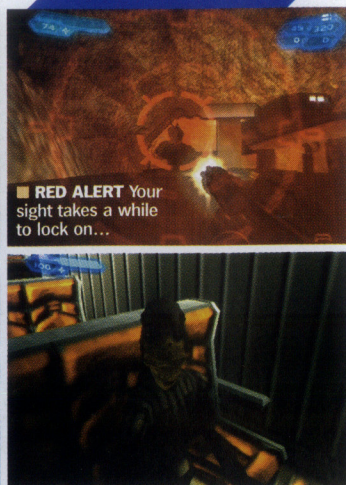
Finally, a cordless controller that gives you all the freedom you've been looking for, no strings attached. The new Logitech® Cordless Controller for PlayStation® is the only cordless controller officially licensed by Sony Computer Entertainment. Performing flawlessly from 6 metres away, it uses precise 2.4GHz RF technology to give you over 50 action-packed hours of gameplay. And with all the thrills of vibration feedback, the time has come to cut the cord.



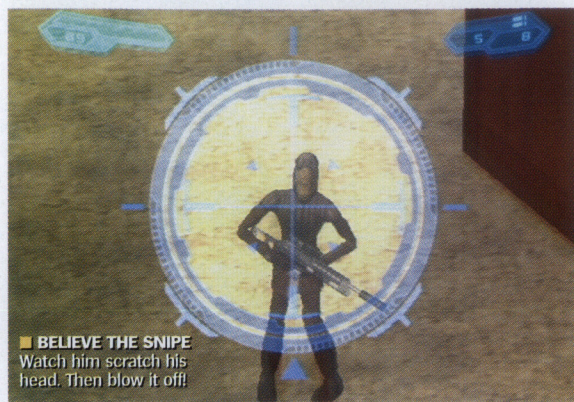
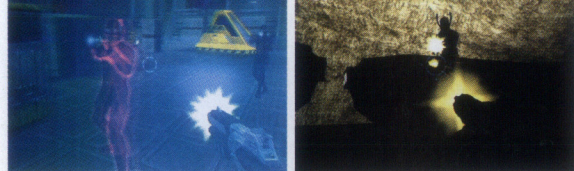
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SOLO SYSTEM Flight sections add a welcome new dimension to the FPS action



RED ALERT Your sight takes a while to lock on...



BELIEVE THE SNIPE Watch film scratch his head. Then blow it off!

MACE GRIFFIN: BOUNTY HUNTER

Trigger-happy hokum or flight of fancy? Er, both actually

PUBLISHER: **VIVENDI**
DEVELOPER: **WARTHOG**
PRICE: **\$99.95**
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **AUGUST**
WEBSITE: **WWW.HUNTTHEDOWN.COM**
60HZ MODE: **NO**
WIDESCREEN: **NO**
SURROUND SOUND: **NO**

BACK STORY

'Steady', would be how best to describe Warthog's PlayStation CV to date. The company first gained respect among the Trekkies by releasing a Star Trek game on PSone and then promptly undid all that good work with Tiny Toons: Plucky's Big Adventure. So far, PS2 has only seen X-Men 2: Wolverine's Revenge as testament to Warthog's PS2 prowess but with games like Battlestar Galactica and X10 in the works, more surprise hits could be, er, pig-penned in.

X Bam! Blown away. Nice one Vivendi, you really got us there. It's rare that we get surprised by a game – normally you instinctively know what you're going to get in advance. The name may be a good indication, or maybe the amount of hype surrounding it. Seeing as Mace Griffin sounds like an obscure Star Wars character, and without anything else to support him, we naturally thought we were in for a turgid ride with this one. Not so, because despite the low-budget visuals and uninspiring opening level, Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter has turned out to be something of a treasure. No massive licences involved, but still a good, sound buy which will enthrall, entertain and can't be compared to any film/toy/lunchbox.

Set in a bleak future, mankind and aliens co-exist in colonies in the outer reaches of the galaxy, where the long arm of the law isn't quite long enough to keep tabs on the shady goings on that occur there. So splinter groups have been set up to help restore order, and it's through one such group, known as the Rangers, that we get acquainted with Mace Griffin. The first mission is played out as a prologue with Mace and his team investigating a disturbance on a remote space station. However, when Mace's comrades are ambushed and mercilessly slaughtered, it's our hero who bags the blame and becomes incarcerated for ten years.

CARRY ON HENRY

Upon his release, and with a sizeable chip on his shoulder, Mace takes up a new career as a bounty

hunter, diving into raging conflicts, gunning down all and sundry and then strutting back out again to pick up a weighty pay-cheque, all the while hot on the heels of those who framed him. To provide the gruff tones of Mace, Warthog enlisted the vocal talents of Henry Rollins [heavily tattooed hulking ex-frontman of US hard-rock act Black Flag]. Although, as with Michael Ironside in Splinter Cell and Mark Hamill in Wolverine's Revenge, just what Rollins brings to the character beyond mere publicity is questionable.

The game is slow to get going, the prologue mission never hints that you're in for anything more than just an average first-person shooter. But once Mace gets out of the slammer, things start to get interesting. Having undertaken his first assignment, we then witness perhaps the only element that sets this game apart from other first-person shooters – the seamless integration of space combat with ground-based shooting action. When Mace jogs towards his craft, you fully expect a cut-scene to kick in at any moment, warping him behind the controls ready to lift off into space. But no, he nears the craft, the door opens and he's able to walk on, climb the steps, slip into the cockpit and seat himself behind the controls before taking off and flying to the next job. It's this small, yet very classy touch that makes the game all the more immersive and rams home the urgency of, for instance, chasing a criminal through a ship then quickly boarding your vessel, pursuing his craft out into space and then blowing him clean out of the cosmos.



SHOOT ME TWO TIME BIG BOY

Each weapon has two ways of being used: standard shot **[X]** and secondary shot **[Y]**. Both are essential for a long life.



CHAIN GUN

Standard shot: Can reel off 80 bullets from a circular chamber in the time it takes to say, "What's that noise?"
Secondary shot: An effective, all-splattering grenade launcher.



SNIPE RIFLE

Standard shot: Highly accurate, this sharp-shooter can chuck out eight bullets with only the merest hint of a delay.
Secondary shot: Just the scope, which zooms in so close you can pick off your enemy's nasal hairs.



MINE GUN

Standard shot: Spews out highly explosive rounds that'll penetrate even the hardest of exteriors.
Secondary shot: Just a laser sight, for added accuracy.



FRAG GRENADES

Standard shot: Toss them like standard grenades and watch them reduce your quivering foes to slushy pulp.
Secondary shot: Toggle their remote capabilities.



PISTOL

Standard shot: Semi-automatic, hold **[X]** to release one bullet at a time.
Secondary shot: Hold **[Y]** to unleash one long fury of bullets.



■ **CHAIN GANG** Rip through interplanetary scum with your bullet spewer



■ **FABIEN** Some friends look shiftier than your foes



■ **MAD AS A SPLATTER** Gratuitous mutilating of dead people? Yep, you can do that



■ **SHORT SIGHTED** It'll hurt you just as much as him!

Any pause for loading or cut-scenes and the momentum would be lost, so the way in which you can run onto your own ship and stick with the chase until its explosive conclusion is breathtaking. Okay, the pilot mode feels lightweight compared to more sim-like, flight-orientated games – you can shoot, lock-on missiles, roll and control the speed – but it's enough to feel like two great games in one. You can pilot different craft as the game goes on, each with different handling physics and defences, so there's always more to learn.

MIND MY HALO

The first-person-shooter elements of the game are functional rather than outstanding and it's obvious that in this department, Warthog has taken some inspiration from the Xbox game *Halo*. Like the way in which your health is handled – you have a bar of shield-energy which depletes when you take a hail of bullets but replenishes quickly if you stop taking hits for a few seconds. The game also features a checkpoint save system whereby it autosaves whenever you reach a new section, eradicating the need to replay extensive, enemy-packed areas if you die. Handy that.

Thankfully, some of these checkpoints are spaced far enough apart to allow for some challenging and

enjoyable stretches of gameplay but it is still annoying how, when you die a few paces into a new section, you have to wait

while that section reloads. You'll forgive the game such delays, though, as the varied gameplay consists of more than mere A-to-B fragging.

You'll constantly have to check your fire to avoid gunning down allies, make effective use of the environments to achieve good sniping vantage points and interact with surveillance cameras and gun turrets to clear forthcoming passageways of danger. The route is rigidly linear, with none of the freedom of, say, *Deus Ex* to make your own decisions and make the game your own, but there are plenty of fine set-piece moments scattered throughout to make you smirk admiringly.

Ultimately, it's the variety that keeps you hooked. One moment you're dog-fighting through an asteroid belt and the next you're hitching a ride on a mine cart, ducking rocks and trying to pick off snipers. You never quite know what's going to happen next. A first-person shooter that's genuinely surprising? Now that really is a bounty worth claiming. □ **Ryan Butt**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	08	Generally good but lacks panache in places
Sound	07	Ear-perforatingly loud with good narrative
Gameplay	07	Two styles, excellently blended with no seams
Life span	06	Challenging but not infuriatingly so

A hype-free, classy intermesh of different styles makes for one of the most compelling games of the year.

08



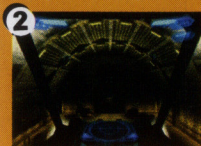
PARK AND RIDE

STARSHIP TROOPER

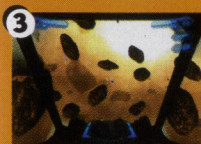
The seamless journey from ground to air and back again, explained. Silky.



In one fluid sequence you run out into the hangar and through the doors to your craft before getting all comfy in the cockpit.



Then press **○** to take off and the ship's auto-pilot will release you from terra firma and into space.



Once you regain control you must go about gunning down any hostile ships while desperately trying not to veer headlong into one of those asteroids.

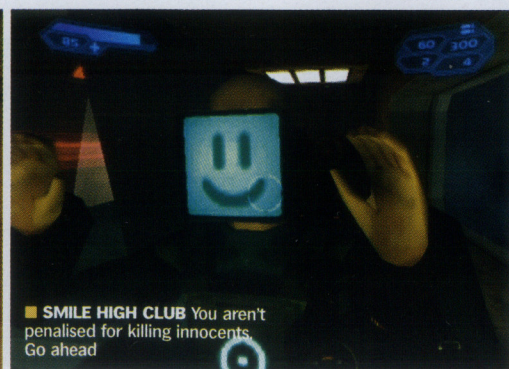


Once the coast is clear, you begin the docking procedure by flying through the landing gates, upon which the auto-pilot will kick in again.

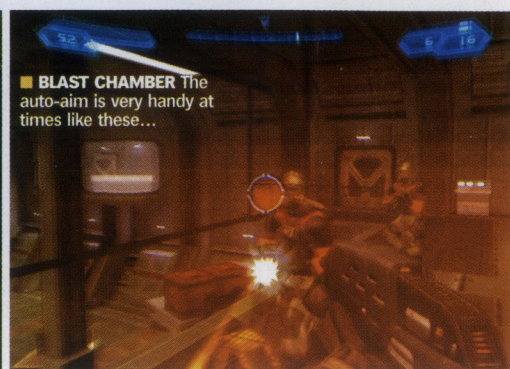


You'll then be lead into the space port on rails but once you land, you're free to get up and stroll back out into the hangar, all in one fluid motion. Lovely.

IT'S BREATHTAKING HOW YOU CAN RUN ONTO YOUR SHIP AND STICK WITH A CHASE UNTIL ITS CONCLUSION



■ **SMILE HIGH CLUB** You aren't penalised for killing innocents. Go ahead



■ **BLAST CHAMBER** The auto-aim is very handy at times like these...



■ **NICK OF IT ALL**
"No, I will not pick up the soap for you"

■ **KOOL AND THE BANG**
Behind the explosion is a truck that contains...

■ **DANCE BEATS**
The DJ must have been playing One True Voice

■ **GUNS AND POSES**
...A clown with an armoured gatling gun. Yeeees

DEAD TO RIGHTS

Join us for a dog day afternoon on the mean streets of Grant City

PUBLISHER: EA
DEVELOPER: NAMCO
PRICE: \$89.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.DEADTORIGHTS.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

BACK STORY

Dead To Rights has been around for a while. It first reared its blood-stained head at games industry expo E3 way back in 2001. It received an American release nearly a year ago, but it was only recently that Namco secured an Aussie publisher in EA.



Anyone who says you should never work with animals clearly hasn't fought a one-man war against crime alongside a throat-chewing, gun-stealing, bomb-sniffing husky wolf called

Shadow. We have, and we can safely say that when you're trapped in a warehouse surrounded by gun-toting nutters, a dog definitely is a man's best friend. Shadow might only play a supporting role, but he's the real star of Namco's bloodthirsty arcade shooter. Good boy, Shadow.

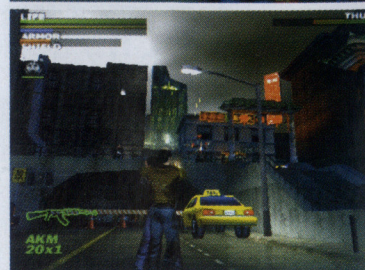
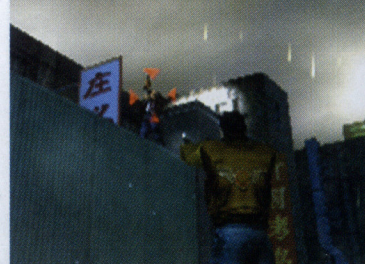
A dog must have a master, and here he goes by the suitably gritty name of Jack Slate. Slate joins the likes of Max Payne, Jack Bauer and Dirty Harry in a long line of 'having a very bad day' American cops with a fridge-sized bug up their ass. Just moments after the game starts Slate finds his dad lying dead with his internal organs decorating the pavement. Minutes later he's been framed for murder and is fast-tracked to Death Row and

a date with the chair. Hence the ass-burrowing fridge bug. There's only one way forward – go kill every goddamn person in the place.

Subtle *Dead To Rights* is not. The basic idea is, 'if it moves, shoot it. If you can't shoot it, punch or kick it. If that fails, unleash the hound'. Which is all fine by us, and if you're a satisfied veteran of the war to save Zion, it'll be fine by you, too. There's more than a passing resemblance to *Enter The Matrix* – an arsenal of ever-changing weaponry, scores of hapless cannon fodder, neat disarm moves, a spot of martial arts and ropy graphics. There's even a dash of bullet time, although it's nowhere near as smart as in the Shiny title. However, *DTR* has a few more clever tricks up the sleeves of its kevlar flak jacket but as they only account for a small amount of gameplay, we'd better talk about the combat first.

It's good. Incredibly gory, somewhat repetitive and

■ **AIM OF THE GAME**
There's a decent auto-targeting system to aid you



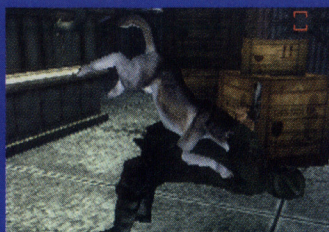
■ **RAIN IN THE ARSE**
DTR's Grant City has the same climate as Melbourne

BARK LIFE

He ain't nuthin' but a hound dog but he plays an all-important part in the game. Meet Shadow, your ever faithful friend and a combat canine.



There'll be times when only Shadow will be able to reach an area. Control switches to the dog and you can direct him to where he needs to be with the analogue stick.



When Shadow's stamina bar is at max you can target an enemy and hit @ to send the mutt off to bite out his throat. Yum. Shadow will also bring his weapon back to you.



Shadow is a police sniffer dog. In the skyscraper level, Jack sends him off to hunt out some bombs. Once Shadow's sniffed around, Jack takes over the disarming duties.

DISARMS AND THE MAN

There are around 16 highly amusing and absolutely brutal disarm moves to unlock. Here's a sample...



BULLET IN THE HEAD
Grab his gun, twist the bloke around, pull his head back and blam! Brains on the ceiling, blood on your shoes.



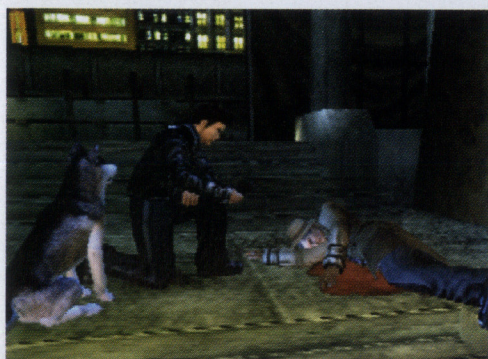
AND EFFING STAY DOWN
Jack takes the gun and slaps the bad guy across the face with it, knocking him down. He then pumps him full of lead.



ONE FOR THE ROAD
After hitting a guy until he's on his knees, Jack strolls away and without even looking, delivers a cap to the back of the head.



SUNNY SIDE UP
Jack boots the guy up in the air, grabs his gun and shoots him, which makes him float in the air for a few seconds. Genius.



DAD TO RIGHTS Jack finds his old pa murdered and that kicks off the story. Whodunnit? Our money's on the dog



rather gratuitous, but good. You'll find yourself in an area – a street, a warehouse or a warehouse, for example – and the only way out is to nail pretty much everyone you set eyes on. There are plenty of ways to do this. Some sections see you armed only with fists and feet, and punching, kicking, throwing and dodging is the only way to sort out the bother. It's pretty basic – just bashing the buttons to pull a simple three-move combo out of the bag when an enemy is near you is about the size of it.

HIT AND RUN

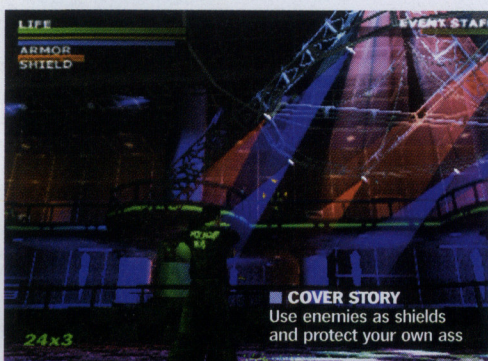
When you're armed and dangerous it's a little more complex but hardly brain-engaging stuff (and quite right, too). There's an auto-target system with a colour-coded crosshair that tells you how likely you are to hit a felon. When it's green, the perp is safe. When it's red, it's time to play his brains on the wall. There's an inordinate amount of intelligent enemies on screen at any one time and they won't stop shooting at you until they're downed, so a minor degree of tactical thinking does need to be employed. To protect yourself you can grab a bloke and use him as a shield MGS-style; or you can find cover, peep out from behind it, then shoot your load.

You rearm yourself either by snaffling the guns of the fallen or by disarming them with one of several highly imaginative moves (see Disarms And The Man). You're never short of hardware but if you do happen to run out, you can despatch Shadow to do the neck-chewing, gun-thieving thing mentioned previously. And at the end of each 'chapter' there's a boss to overcome – again this involves little more than plugging away with whatever shooter comes to hand.

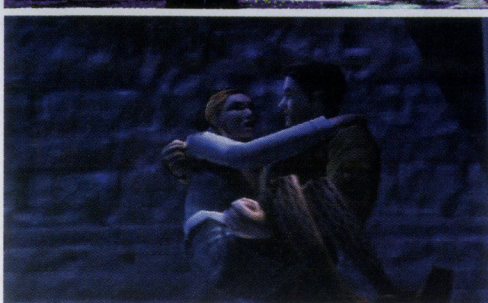
And so to the clever tricks. Breaking up the violence is a series of tasks that are essentially a test of your rhythm. Imagine our surprise when after just five minutes we were distracting some bouncers by getting a pole dancer to gyrate in a suitably erotic fashion, tapping the buttons in time to



WALL OR NOTHING
Yep, there's plenty of destructible scenery



COVER STORY
Use enemies as shields and protect your own ass



CATCH OF THE DAY
Jack rescues one of the candidates for the local elections. We kid you not

IF IT MOVES, SHOOT IT. IF YOU CAN'T SHOOT IT, PUNCH OR KICK IT. IF THAT FAILS, UNLEASH THE HOUND

the music. There are also, among other things, bombs to disarm, locks to be picked, weights to be lifted, arms to be wrestled and girls to be protected.

All sound good so far? Indeed. Sadly there are a few rather chunky faults. For one, the graphics are rather lame – they're grainy, and not a million miles from the likes of *Syphon Filter 3* – and the game's also prone to some serious slowdown. It's also very easy, and by no means an epic either. *DTR* was released in the States some nine months ago, where the main complaint was that it was too hard, but there's been a definite dumbing down of the difficulty level for the local version. We'd recommend playing on the hard setting or else it will all be over far too prematurely. And you wouldn't want that.

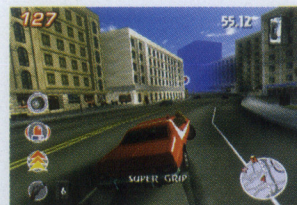
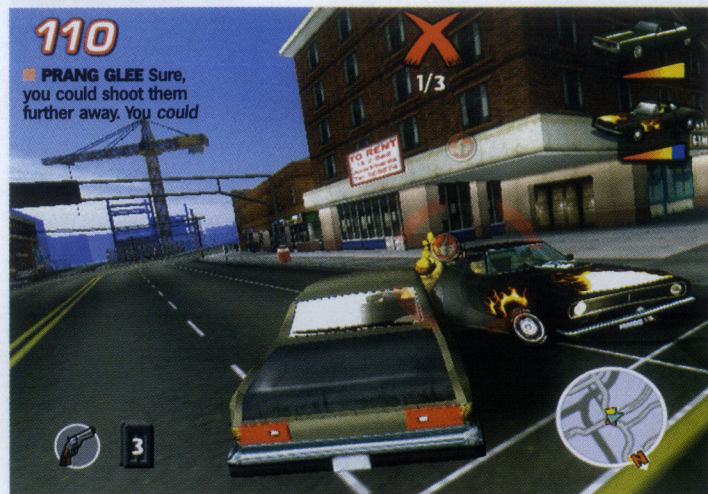
Things also get repetitive very rapidly. The first couple of hours are great, but you'll eventually find yourself blasting your way from samey-looking warehouse to samey-looking warehouse just yearning for a quiet lie down. But overall *DTR* is just about worth the entrance fee – non-stop over-violent action, some nice little asides to the main event and a story that's just about sufficient to make you believe in your cause. And let's not forget your little doggy-woggy. Ahhhh. ☐ Nick Ellis

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	06	<i>DTR</i> is a few years old. And it shows
Sound	08	Decent voice acting and suitable opera of destruction
Gameplay	08	Great gunfights interjected with neat mini-games
Life span	06	A weekend at most on the normal difficulty setting

Near endless gunplay with hand-to-hand scrapping, backed up with a dark tale. *DTR* is good, mindless fun

07



SKID MARKS! Powerslides, jumps, trashing boxes – it all awards points



STARSKY & HUTCH

Fruit stall owners and cardboard box stackers beware, Starsky & Hutch are back

PUBLISHER: VIVENDI
DEVELOPER: MIND'S EYE PRODUCTIONS
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.STARSKY-AND-HUTCH.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO
PERIPHERALS: G-CON 2 LIGHTGUN, STEERING WHEEL

BACK STORY

Established in 1995, Mind's Eye Productions has its fingers in a number of media pies. Aside from Starsky & Hutch – its first PS2 title – and the daft but enjoyable Sheep on PSone, MEP has developed games for Sky Interactive's Gamestar Portal (including Celebrity Shagmatch and Tomb Raider) and the piping hot mobile market. It also produces computer animation for TV and is responsible for Robot Wars' menus and stats screens.

X Starsky and Hutch. Everybody knows them, right? Sure. There's that red car with the white stripe, and those two cops. And it was set in San Francisco... or was it LA? Hang on, it might have been New York. And there was a bear in it, wasn't there? Well it was definitely the dark-haired one with the cardigan who drove the car. Hutch. Wait, which one was David Soul again?

The fact is, the majority of PS2 gamers who were even alive during the show's original '75 to '79 heyday, were probably too busy filling their cloth nappies or clipping playing cards against their Grifters' spokes to fake motorbike revs to remember anything much about the classic cop series. And as for anyone born in the decade of Knight Rider... fuggedaboutit.

Empire's masterstroke has been to pick a franchise that had a wafer-thin premise to start with and then build a game up from those foundations rather than ruin something sophisticated by trying to make it playable.

Knitting a healthy thread of post modernism into Starsky's cardie, the game is divided TV-style into three 'seasons' of six episodes each. Your success in any episode is controlled by your VR (or viewer rating) points (see The Higher The Viewer). Let the VR counter drop to zero and the show is cancelled.

Starsky & Hutch tries to keep things varied with checkpoint dashes,

escort missions (driving Hutch's crappy brown motor), but essentially the game is a one trick pony. Screech around Bay City chasing perps in cars and shooting at them until they stop/explode.

And yet, Starsky & Hutch possesses a remarkable 'one more go' pull. In part it's down to the Striped Tomato's superbly chunky handling. The car feels like it has real inertia on the road, making for grin-worthy power slides and gutsy traffic weaving. Get a mate in to join you though, and Starsky & Hutch really comes into its own. With one person doing a 'Starsky at the wheel' and the other 'going Hutch' with a free aim and tonnes of ammo, there's endless fun on offer.

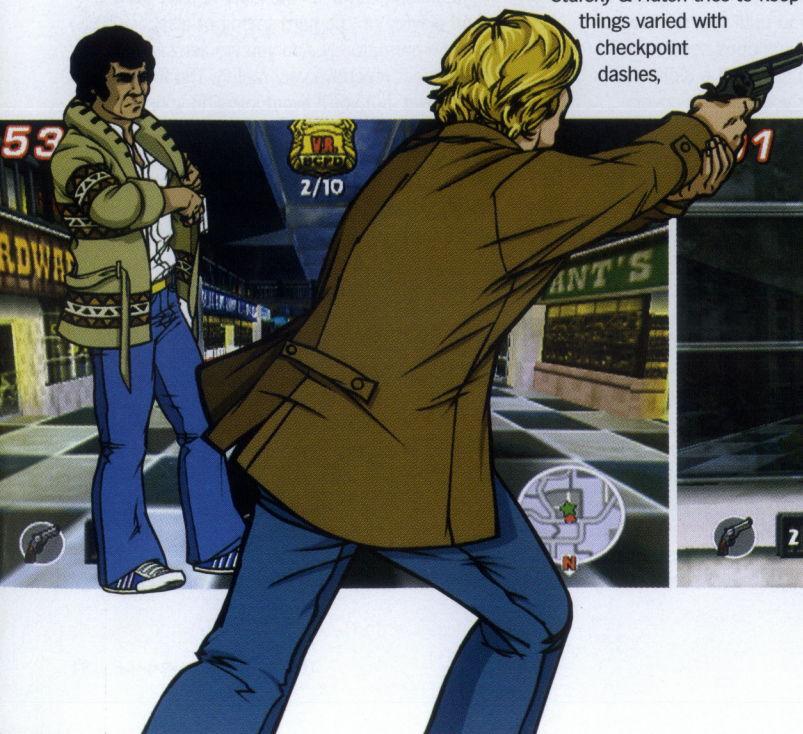
The lo-fi cut-scenes are laughable – there's more variety in a packet of fruit pastilles – but Starsky & Hutch beats the odds through sheer easy-going '70s charm, and by doing the hugely fun driving and shooting two-player experience with great polish. **□ Paul Fitzpatrick**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	08	Bay City is huge and looks the business too
Sound	07	Wah wah guitars and burning rubber. Great stuff, man
Gameplay	06	Lots of fun but basically the same mission repeated
Life span	07	Not massive, but tricky. The two-player fun is endless

Given the lack of gameplay variety this cop caper shouldn't be as consistently enjoyable as it is.

07



BADGE BAITING Free roam has you searching for cop badges



THE HIGHER THE VIEWER

It's not the sleazy criminals you have to worry about, it's your viewing figures. Quick Starsky, do something spectacular!



WATCH OUT!

Fail to keep the viewers interested in your exploits and it's instant cancellation for the show and the end of your mission. Bummer!



'70S ICONS

The easiest way to keep those viewing figures high is to shoot every VR icon you see. Not that easy when your partner is sliding all over the road. Dude!



JUMP AROUND

There are also some pretty flash stunts you can pull off to really keep the audience on the edge of its seat. Whoah Starsky!



BOX CLEVER

But nothing gets the viewers cheering like careering pointlessly through conveniently stacked cardboard boxes. Scorchin' Hutch!

SEEING DOUBLE



As well as *ATV Offroad Fury 1 & 2*, the PlayStation 2 has also seen the release of *ATV Quad Power Racing 2*. With so many similar sounding ATV games on the shelves it's easy to get confused. The *Offroad Fury* games edge a little in front of the *Quad Power* title, thanks to smoother gameplay and bigger jumps. However *Quad Power* does have the nice SSX-style 'do more tricks to get turbo boosts' and the ability to punch other riders off their bikes in its favour.



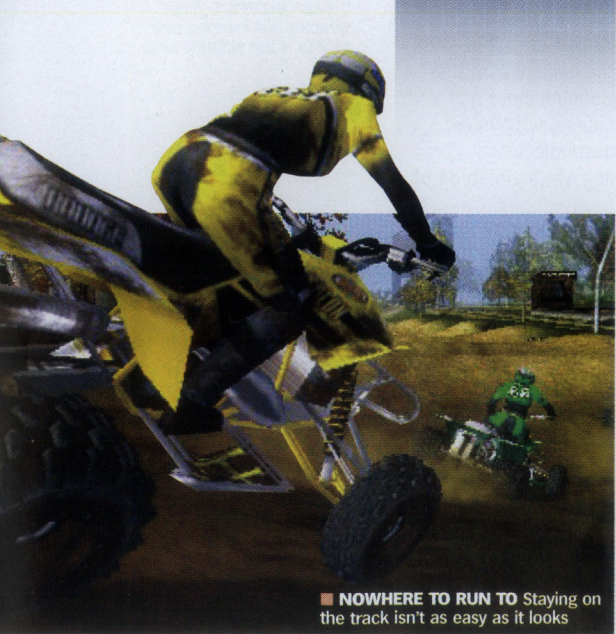
■ **TOO EASY** OPS2's Naz has no competition



PUBLISHER: THQ
DEVELOPER: RAINBOW STUDIOS
PRICE: \$59.95
PLAYERS: 1-4
OUT: SEPTEMBER
WEBSITE: WWW.RAINBOWSTUDIOS.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: YES
PROGRESSIVE SCAN: YES

■ BACK STORY

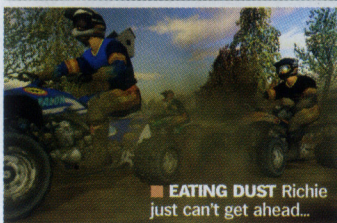
Rainbow Studios is not only the behind the original *ATV Offroad Fury*, but also *Splashdown*, Matt Hoffman's *Pro BMX 2*, and *Motocross Madness 2* on PC, all of which demonstrate the importance of a highly developed mid-air trick system and a convincing physics engine.



■ **NOWHERE TO RUN TO** Staying on the track isn't as easy as it looks



■ **STILL FIGHTING** Richie (in black) struggles to keep up with Naz



■ **EATING DUST** Richie just can't get ahead...



ATV OFFROAD FURY 2

It's time to write your name in the dirt again – this time with four wheels



Want to get closer to nature? Hug a tree or two? If you're quick, you can manage both from the comfy seat of your trusty All Terrain Vehicle (ATV). Rainbow Studios has squeezed out a successor to its original PS2 offering. The formula for this sequel doesn't stray far from its roots at all. Once again riders are set loose on recreational quad racers to roam freely or take on one of the many racing challenges. The game's 40 or so new environments contain every natural element from water and mud, to ice, sand and snow. Somewhere in there they also managed to squeeze in a bunch of devilishly designed courses of all shapes, bumps, and sizes. As usual, though, most of the good stuff is safely locked away until you start bringing home some championship gold.

Offroad Fury 2's structure is also reminiscent of the first game. The three main choices are Race, Freestyle and Championships. Within these choices, the racing modes include the outdoor trail blazing of Nationals, the indoor battles of Supercross, and the waypoint challenges of Enduro events. And should you tire of these, you can always use the waypoint editor to slap down your own gates and create a custom Enduro race. Freestyling is less about line honours and more about busting big air stunts in return for serious points. Sustaining mid air tricks for as long as possible and stringing several together to form combos are sure ways of racking up the readies. The measly list of 24 stunts is slightly disappointing considering the high quality of the rest of the package though.

One welcome addition is the inclusion of several

unlockable mini games, which certainly add further replay value – especially in multiplayer. Game modes include King of the Hills, Tag, Treasure Hunt and Hockey. In Tag, riders need to secure a bouncing ball and hang onto it longer than anyone else, the catch being the longer you have the ball, the slower your ATV moves. Another example is Hockey, which oddly enough has you slip sliding around an ice rink aboard your ATV, while shooting goals. All of the game's multiplayer modes can be accessed via a choice of split-screen, iLink and online – for our lucky friends in America. Thankfully we won't have to wait much longer either.

The vehicle handling and controls remain tight and responsive, with the all-important jump preloading remaining as an essential technique for mastering the perfect jump. Riders can also alter different engine, traction and suspension tuning parameters.

Although its hardly revolutionary, this sequel does manage to build on the strengths of the original game with subtle new touches here and there, and is certainly worth a spin in a PS2 near you. □ **Mike Wilcox**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	07	Solid surroundings and smooth animation
Sound	07	Mix of two stroke engines and licensed music
Gameplay	08	More of the same but that's ok
Life span	08	Good set of modes to keep your coming back

More of the same, with new tracks, riders, racing modes and plenty of good old fashioned fun.

08



■ **HE MADE THAT LOOK EASY** The trick system is intuitive





■ **VIDEODROME** The video editor lets you create a range of groovy effects while splicing different images together.



■ **GRAFFITI ART** This 'side of a NY subway train' design is just one alternative style.

MUSIC 3000

Jester's astonishing music creation tool is back. Your pop career starts here

PUBLISHER: QV SOFTWARE
DEVELOPER: JESTER
PRICE: \$89.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW
WEB SITE: WWW.JESTER-INTERACTIVE.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO

■ BACK STORY

The Music series began in 1998 under the watchful eye of Creative Director Tim Wright – aka Cold Storage – the in-house musician at Psygnosis for several years. The intention was to provide a realistic yet intuitive music creation package – an ambition which has been realised through subsequent sequels – especially the PS2 debut, MTV Music Generator 2. Music 3000 now offers 64 channels, to Music's 16, as well as USB sampling and movie clip video editing.



Creativity. A word seldom used in connection with playing videogames. Sure we can appreciate the sublime elegance of a Max Payne slow-mo shoot-out or a well-executed Virtua Fighter combo, but try showing your 13-year-old sister why Lion's praying mantis kung fu style is a thing of beauty comparable to any Justin Timberlake dance spasm and she'll scoff dismissively. She may, however, be impressed by a masterfully crafted slab of beats knocked up in a couple of hours on your PS2. Probably, deep down, you will be too. Music 3000, the latest title in Jester Interactive's trail-blazing series, is all about creativity. It's truly addictive, universally entertaining stuff.

Veterans of Jester's Music 2000 on PSone will immediately realise that this is a very different beast from its predecessors. The game's interface has been entirely overhauled, replacing the simple Lego-brick look with an array of buttons housed within an amorphous editing screen. Now different menu components seamlessly slide in and out at the touch

of a button to give you the impression you're working on one huge sound desk.

NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

What we have here is a feature-packed sampler/sequencer ready-loaded with thousands of adaptable riffs. These are split into four categories including drums, harmonies and vocals, and then sub-divided into six genres: trance, metal, pop, garage, hip hop and indie. Metal is a cornucopia of meaty guitar riffs and thudding drums; garage has plenty of throbbing bass; and pop has all those squiddy 'can't get you out of my head' beats.

Putting these into a song is, as you'd expect from this series, laughably easy. You select the riff, drag it across to the 64 channel editor and drop it in. Want to listen? Guide the arrow to the beginning of the song and press **START**. Now keep adding more riffs and loops (on separate tracks, of course) until you've created a three-minute pop masterpiece.

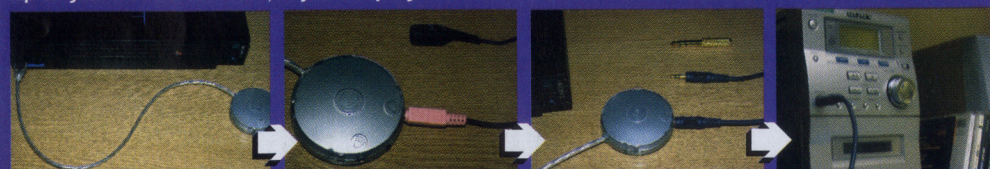
But this is only the beginning. Via a multitude of



■ **DEEP Bleeps** Editing samples and creating new sounds is the ultimate aim.

TAKING A SAMPLE

Rip-off your own CD collection, or just sample yourself. Here's how.



THE USB CONNECTOR

Music 3000 comes with a USB hub that plugs into one of the two USB ports at the front of your machine. You're now ready to connect your sound source. There were plans to allow CD sampling from the PlayStation 2's own drive, but unfortunately these have since been dropped.

GET ON THE MIC

You can also plug a small microphone into the hub, go to the sampling screen, press record and then sing, whistle or hum. You can either use this as a sample, or get the software to turn it into a tune.

SAMPLE DELIGHTS

To sample from a hi-fi or DVD player you need a connection lead. We used one from a minidisc player that comes with an adaptor for larger headphone sockets. If you need to buy one, they won't cost you more than \$10.

HOOK UP. RIP-OFF

Put one end of the cable in the USB hub and the other into the headphone socket of your audio source. Hit record on the game screen and press play. You can then edit the sample and stick it in the track editor. Easy.



■ **SOUND ADVICE** The banks of buttons and sliders can intimidate. Don't skive off the 19 music lessons!

IMAGE IS EVERYTHING

Just like everything else in Music 3000, the video creation tool has been massively expanded and improved since Music 2000.

Instead of a limited collection of swirly patterns you now get hundreds of movie clips, still images and animations which can be layered over each other or spliced together with cool effects. You can even synchronise the images in time with the beat of the music. Here are some select cuts:



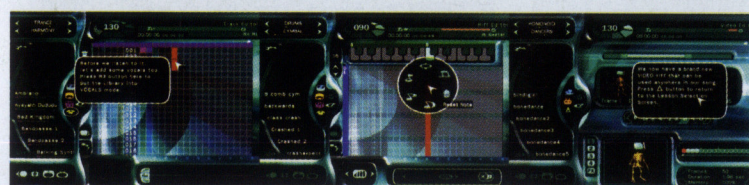
YOU'RE WORKING ON ONE HUGE SOUND DESK. YOU SOON REALISE, THIS AIN'T A TOY ANY MORE

mixing and sound editing functions you can add reverb, echo and delay, then create further texture by adjusting volume and tempo. Effects can be

applied to the whole song, a single track, or a solitary riff, so there's plenty of potential for adding depth to an arrangement. You can also create your own riffs using a huge range of samples, or just edit your own from scratch.

Luckily, you don't have to plough through a phone book-sized instruction manual to figure this process out – *Music 3000* comes with 19 in-built lessons covering every facet of the 'game'. Each one guides you through, step-by-step, using the actual video and music editors. These sessions are quick, logical and relatively authoritative, although more complex subjects – like video editing, for example – are skipped over too quickly, ending with a suggestion that you experiment.

But, of course, that's what creativity is all about. Fiddling with the controls, slowly learning new facets of the system. It's the only way to progress. Can't be bothered right now? That's okay – getting a cool, professional tune together is eminently possible using just the default riffs and a few of your own samples. Ah, yes. As with *MTV Music Generator 2*, you can connect your PlayStation 2 via the USB port to any piece of audio visual equipment and take samples from it. It's a straightforward procedure and you end up with crisp, high-quality recordings of anything you like – movies, DVD, even the radio. This opens up infinite possibilities, but more specifically, lets you cram your dark urban electronica full of hip movie quotes. (It's possible to get up to seven different samples into each track, but make sure you have plenty of Memory Cards on hand as they will take up a load of space.)



FIX THE MIX It's easy to learn the song craft basics.

On top of this, you also get the much talked about V2M system. Using a microphone you can whistle, hum or sing a riff and have it converted into a series of notes: great if your technical grasp of music compares with that of any boy band member. This is entertaining stuff in its own right – as long as you can muster a clear whistle or hum, or sing vaguely in the key of C. It'll take you a few goes to actually get the thing to understand what you're trying to communicate, but when we finally teased it into repeating our test tune (*What The World Needs Now* by Burt Bacharach – not sure why) it was thoroughly amusing. It's not clear how useful this gimmick will prove, but it's good to have none-the-less.

The *Music* series has been one of the best things to happen to console gaming over the last few years. It offers truly creative entertainment within an initially idiot-proof environment – and will go on to provide budding electronic musicians with a firm bedrock of compositional skills, before they try out a 'genuine' sequencer. *Music 3000* has its limits of course, and it will take you ages to find them, but this is a \$90 PS2 game, not a five-grand sequencer/sampler. It's also a big enough leap ahead of previous incarnations to warrant another purchase for those who already own *MTV Music Generator 2*. Indeed, every PS2 gamer with an atom of musical ambition in their DNA needs to give this a try. ☐ Keith Stuart



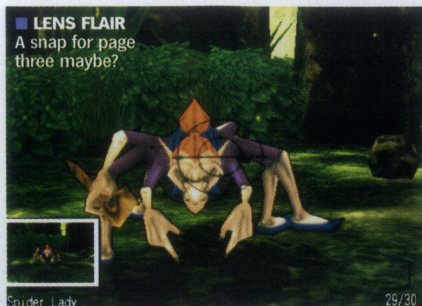
CO-OP POP Create tunes along with the video so they work together.

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	07	The menu screens are much improved
Sound	09	16,000 riffs and any sample you like
Gameplay	09	Fun that's beyond the usual gaming demographic
Life span	09	So complex it'll grow alongside you for months

A mightily authoritative music title, which works as a fun diversion or a serious tool. Unmissable for wannabe bedroom artists.

09

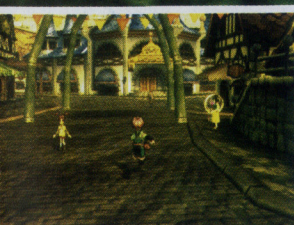


PUBLISHER: SONY
DEVELOPER: LEVEL 5
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: SEPTEMBER
WEBSITE: WWW.LEVEL5.CO.JP/EN/NEW_P/DC2.HTML
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

BACK STORY

Dark Chronicle is the sequel to Dark Cloud, which is probably best remembered for introducing the brilliant Georama, a construction system along the lines of Theme Park World and Sim City. On your travels through the dungeons you'd pick up all kind of raw elements which could then be used to build everything from lakes to libraries. Thankfully, Georama also reappears in Dark Chronicle and although integral to the game, doesn't play quite such a significant role.

SILVER
PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE REVIEW



DARK CHRONICLE

Do the heavens smile on this RPG sequel? The forecast's good

X You caught us at a bad moment. Unfortunately, we can't really afford the time to actually pen a review because we're still too busy twiddling our thumbsticks with *Dark Chronicle*. The game is just wonderful – an absolute delight to play on every level. Yes, at its heart the title's an RPG, and a fantasy one too, and that might send some of you running to the hills screaming, but this isn't just Dungeons & Dragons with a spot of Georama (see Back Story). It's wickedly immersing, genuinely diverse and utterly charming. What's more, there are none of those frickin', random battles.

So, you want to know the story? What, really? Now? But there's so much that we need to be doing. Just for starters, then, you can look at What's The Story (below) for the full yarn, because if we don't dispose of the Rainbow Butterfly guarding the final level in the spooky forest, all hell will break loose. Literally. And when the fighting in the forest is done and enough cash has been collected to buy the stove from Morton's 24/7 store back in the town, some fish have got to be caught for dinner. Make yourself useful and find some bait, this RPG party marches on its stomach.

UPGRADE SLAVE

Then there's the matter of maintaining and upgrading the weapons. Do you think a standard Work Wrench is going to upgrade to a monster-mashing Smash Wrench all by itself? No, it needs a lot of love and attention, so careful not to break it. Those fancy magic crystals that we've been tearing around collecting, they ain't for the Christmas tree. They have properties that enable you to build up your essential adventurer's kit. For example,

WHAT'S THE STORY?

It was just an ordinary day like any other when suddenly...

A young lad called Max, who has never set eyes on the world outside his home town of Palm Brinks, is given a jewelled pendant by his father. Little does Max know that the stone holds immense power and is coveted by a great evil that looks down from far away. After narrowly avoiding a lynching at the hands of a troupe of killer clowns, Max's inquisitive nature leads him out of the town and into the world beyond. Here he discovers the awful truth – evil walks abroad. The fate of the world – past, present and future – hangs in the balance. Together with Monica, a time-travelling princess-type he meets along the way, Max sets off to put things to rights.



you'll need a sackful of them if you want to equip your Ridepod, a mechanical monster-slaying machine called, er, Steve, with a new set of side-mounted cannons.

And don't even get us started on the Georama, the system used to rebuild the ravaged world that our heroes inhabit. Collect this, invent that, hunt out that magical stone, plant a tree here, build a house there – no, no, put it next to the stream, not facing a rock. It's enough to give you apoplexy. And there just isn't the space to mention the mini-golf competitions, the beguiling storyline, the time travel aspect and the host of supporting characters who flit in and out of your party.

All these elements (and more) combine to make for one of the richest, most involving and engaging games you could ask for. RPG fanatics will be in raptures, and even if you're not usually the sort to dabble in the genre, your heart would have to be made of stone not to fall in love. Yes it'll take you months to finish and the amount of stuff to get your head around is almost bewildering, but when all too often you can complete an adventure in a weekend, *Dark Chronicle* is a ray of PS2 sunshine.

Now, if you'll excuse us... **Nick Ellis**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	09	Enchanting environments and great characters
Sound	08	The genteel music never bugs, unlike the US accents
Gameplay	09	Engrossing, complex and varied beyond belief
Life span	10	A virtual lifetime

If you've finished *FFX* and need a new fix, look no further. This is top-tier RPG fare, an essential purchase.

09



I MADE THIS!

You can spend your cash on new gear, or you can use your noggin and invent it yourself. Here's how...



First off you need to get a hunch for an idea, which can be done by looking in the books that are scattered around, or by chatting to people.



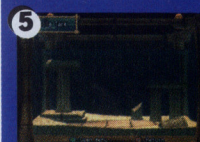
Now you've got a thought, you'll have to hunt out the items on the list and snap 'em with your camera.



Once all the right pics have been taken, switch to the Make menu and assemble the photos in your think bubble, hit @, and ping!



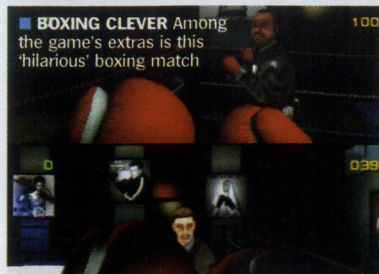
To actually build the, er, aquarium, you'll need the materials – glass, wood and water. So off you trot to find or buy them.



And here it is. A lovely aquarium to display all the fish you've caught. Absolute madness.



■ GIVE IT UP Grab enemies to persuade their mates to surrender



■ BOXING CLEVER Among the game's extras is this 'hilarious' boxing match



■ BULLET CRIME Fancy slo-mo effects are no replacement for gameplay



■ DOUBLE CREAM Many of the weapons allow for some two-handed death-dealing

DIE HARD: VENDETTA

Stop Press! McClane in German terrorist shocker!

PUBLISHER: VIVENDI
DEVELOPER: BITS STUDIOS
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-4
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.DIEHARDVENDETTA.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO
PERIPHERALS: MULTITAP

■ BACK STORY
British codeshop Bits Studios has been around for 15 years, and developed nearly 30 titles on multiple platforms, including games such as Chase HQ and Alien 3, plus several Spider-Man titles. Vendetta is its first effort on PS2, though it was previously released on Gamecube. Bits currently has another PS2 title, Rogue Ops, in development which should be out by the end of this year.

■ AUTOMATIC FOR THE PEOPLE Auto-aiming helps you do your citizenly duty



John McClane is the unluckiest man ever. Trouble's never far away when he's around. Hijackings, bombings, sieges – they follow him around like the stench of a festering snapper in your back pocket. And those Germans – phew! Have they got it in for him. But several years have passed since *With A Vengeance*, all without a sniff of heavily armed psychopathic Europeans, and John's thinking about retirement. No such luck – someone's gone and kidnapped his daughter. Time to don that soon-to-be-grubby vest and brush up on your mother-loving profanities old son...

Of course, it can only be a member of the Gruber family behind this dastardly deed. Chief evil-doer from the first film, Hans, begat a son some time before meeting his altitude and asphalt-flavoured demise. Said son is out to avenge his dad's death, and he's come to Los Angeles to start a ruckus. A plot as predictable as the sunrise maybe; but at least there's some attempt to vary the run 'n' shoot FPS gameplay through the inclusion of a stealth mode – intended to let you creep up on enemies and disarm them – thus potentially giving you two ways to play.

VESTED INTEREST

The trouble is, it doesn't actually work very well. In fact, the only times stealth seems to have any effect is when plot advancement requires that you do so. For example, when you need to rescue hostages, you can generally sneak up behind the terrorists and pick them off one by one, but in open play they're more eagle-eyed than pointy-eared elf Legolas. There seems to be no logical field of vision mapped out for them, meaning you're almost always spotted, and it's a wasted opportunity for

Bits Studios to inject some clever *Splinter Cell*-style sneakiness into proceedings.

Of course, that'd be excusable if the gunplay was exciting, but it's not. Everything's very linear, with an obvious feeling of being shepherded from one area to the next. Advancement is purely a case of killing everyone, or grabbing keys to open doors. The visuals are basic at best, despite the use of some (now clichéd) slo-mo bullet time effects. And not even McClane's witty dialogue really does much to gloss over the game's shortcomings. *Vendetta*'s not an awful title, just an average one. Which is almost as bad. *Die Hard Trilogy* on PSone is more fun, and that's nearly five years old. Now surely that can't be right?

Besides, what we'd really like to know is, how do the Grubers keep getting through customs anyway? "Business or pleasure, sir? Oh, you're an evil arch-criminal here to take revenge on New York's finest? Step this way, sir. Have a nice day..." As for McClane, while his life's been plagued by extreme violence, being the star of this will probably be enough to send him packing to the nearest nursing home. And he thought he was unlucky before... ☐ **Adrian Lawton**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

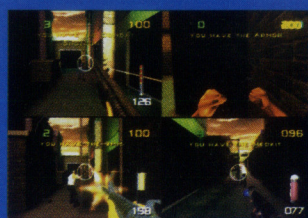
Graphics	05	Outdated and nowhere near PS2 at its best
Sound	06	<i>Die Hard</i> dialogue and average effects
Gameplay	05	Tries and fails to do things differently
Life span	06	Even with the new multiplayer, you'll quickly move on

A blockbuster (if ageing) licence and potentially good stealth element let down by a lack of imagination.

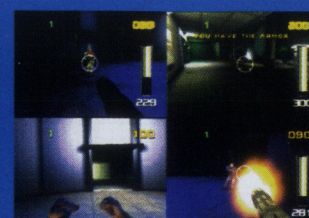
06

DIE ANOTHER PLAY

All new for the PS2 version of *Vendetta* is the multiplayer mode. Split-screen, the visuals are even worse than normal, but at least there's a varied (if uninspired) selection of modes and levels to choose from.



Deathmatch. The usual every man for himself madness. Shame it looks so lame.



Prefer a bit of two-on-two action for the weekend, sir? You'd be wanting Team Deathmatch then.



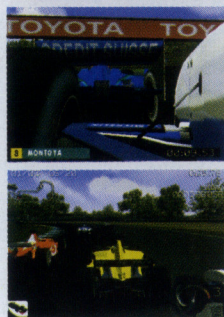
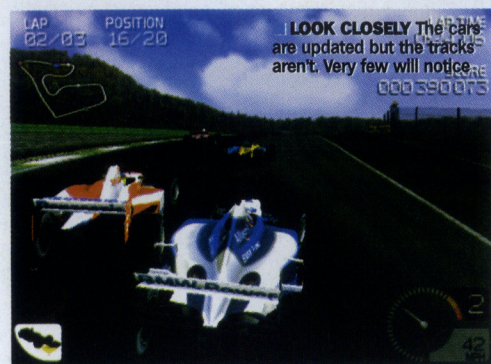
The cunningly named Capture The Badge mode. It doesn't take a genius to work it out.



Not forgetting the oh-so-predictable King Of The Hill. Yawn. Quick bout of 'Splitters 2 anyone?

REVIEW

FORMULA ONE 2003

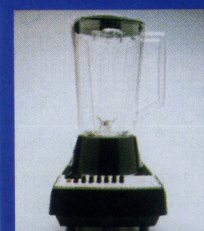


OH, THANKS A LOT

Studio Liverpool hasn't been creating team-themed waffle. So what's it been doing?



IN! The lengthy podium sequences are well done, with impressive motion-capturing. You'll watch once then skip them – they add nothing to the game.



OUT! These cars squeeze around 900bhp through super expensive exhaust systems. So how come they sound like broken blenders, then?



IN! What we really want are made-up trophies. And as the tears silently roll down our faces in the blue TV light, the edges will blur and glow like the Holy Grail.

FORMULA ONE 2003

The most telling part of that title isn't 2003, it's Formula



What to say? Like the ending of an affair, there comes a point when words dissolve – it's all been said, it's all played out, over and over.

When words can change nothing, the meaning drains away. It was good once and now it's not, even though it hasn't changed, of course. The feeling has and that's enough. Like a joke that once made you laugh, a haircut that once seemed so cool, an unused ticket to a plane that crashed. What to say? Pain.

Formula One 2003 is superb in its irrelevance. It's easily the best F1 sim on PS2, offering great subtlety of handling, beautiful cars and tracks, massive tuning complexity and surprising ease of use. There's also almost no reason to buy it. The 2002 iteration is, ooooh, 99.7% as pleasurable, as none of the changes here affect the fundamental experience. Studio Liverpool's racer was fresh first and last in 2001 – this year's version is superb but going nowhere. We're visiting a known place. The feeling was good, and now it's not.

THE DYING OF THE LIGHT

F1 has taken a hammering recently, both real and simulated. Last year TV sagged under 17 tearfully uneventful races while a phalanx of PS2 titles slid ineptly into the bargain bin. Only a few claim the rule changes have reinvigorated the racing. Ignoring the rain that really has made the difference. Qualifying with race fuel levels in the actual sport is meant to jumble up grids, as potentially faster cars are hobbled with extra weight. This in turn leads to more – any, please – overtaking. So why no pre-qualifying emphasis on fuel and pit stop strategy here? Yes, you can adjust them (and almost anything on

the car, plus race length, driver aids, brake wear) but without any serious focus on fuel, the whole point of Saturday qualifying is lost. But then, these rule changes are really just a bright plaster cast on Grand Prix racing's broken legs. The bone marrow seeps away elsewhere. And in the game there's racing and overtaking anyway, so it doesn't add anything.

All of which leaves imperceptibly updated liveries and a few switched-around names on the results screen. The tracks, most notably Monaco and Austria, have not been updated. Is it worth \$100? Not really. Sure, there's an odd spectator option, new camera angles – blah – and a row of predictable multiplayer modes, but nothing that'll clinch the deal.

But wait, is this you? Just bought a PS2, haven't got any other GP games (though they're in double figures), don't want to see Button in a Renault and laugh in the face of *Burnout 2*'s excitement, *GT3*'s grandeur and the panel-denting battles of *V8 Supercars*. Yes? Then buy this. It's magnificent. But everyone else... what to say? Ignore the pain and move on. **Steve Williams**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	08	Detailed, rapid, occasional flickering and slowdown
Sound	04	Horrible synthesised whining lets the cars down
Gameplay	06	Pick any similar car for any castrated modern track
Life span	07	A great sim but an increasingly boring game

If this were a PC mag, *Formula One 2003* would be a patch. Slightly sexier but still the same underneath.

07

PUBLISHER: SONY
DEVELOPER: STUDIO LIVERPOOL
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-4
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.UK.PLAYSTATION.COM
60HZ MODE: YES
WIDESCREEN: YES
SURROUND SOUND: YES
PERIPHERALS: STEERING WHEEL, MULTITAP

BACK STORY

Studio Liverpool created the original in this series, *Formula One 2001*, as well as its follow up called, unbelievably, *Formula One 2002*. It also made the futuristic racer *Wipeout Fusion*. Before its PS2 phase, the company was known as Psygnosis and created *Rollcage*, *Lemmings* and the original *Wipeout* games among others.



PS2 and "PlayStation" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. EyeToy™:Play is a collection of twelve mini games that puts you in the thick of the action. Simply plug in the small motion-sensitive camera and watch as you're transformed from your lounge room onto your screen; where your head, shoulders, arms and legs control every action. Become a kung fu master, soccer pro, DJ, boxing champ, even a juggling expert. And the best part is, the whole family can play. EyeToy™:Twelve games, one camera.



Be the controller

Get up and
play!



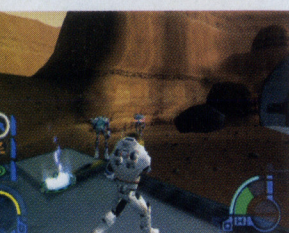
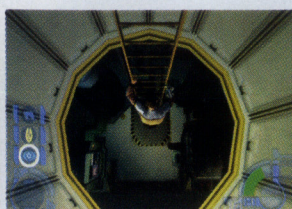
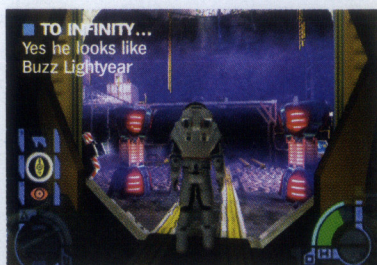
A new way of gaming has begun. EyeToy™:Play is a collection of twelve mini games that puts you in the thick of the action. Simply plug in the small motion-sensitive camera and watch as you're transformed from your lounge room onto your screen; where your head, shoulders, arms and legs control every action. Become a kung fu master, soccer pro, DJ, boxing champ, even a juggling expert. And the best part is, the whole family can play. **EyeToy™:Twelve games, one camera.**



EYE

www.eyetoy.com

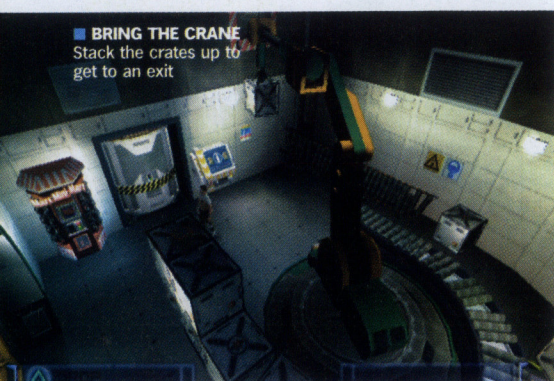
PlayStation 2



OXY MORON Keep an eye on that tiny gauge or you'll be space debris



BOT IN LOVE It's a bit frightening when tiny drone Iris tries to flirt with you



BRING THE CRANE Stack the crates up to get to an exit



IRIS CHARM Look, this just isn't going to work

RTX RED ROCK

Mars? Mmm. Except the vending machines on this red planet only sell medikits

PUBLISHER: EA
DEVELOPER: LUCASARTS
PRICE: \$69.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.LUCASARTS.COM/PRODUCTS/RTX
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

BACK STORY

LucasArts is mainly known for its Star Wars games. These titles, though enjoyable, are often patchy in quality. RTX Red Rock is the company's attempt to broaden the universe in which its games inhabit.

LucasArts, the company best known for its Star Wars movie tie-ins, stays within the sci-fi genre with the new action adventure, RTX Red Rock. The story of the game, unfettered by the trappings of the Star Wars universe, is actually quite intriguing, if a little generic. You play former Army Ranger, Wheeler, a cynical tough guy with a quick wit and a bionic arm and eye. After being injured in battle (hence the aforementioned bionic enhancements) you now spend your days drinking, playing kinky games with your VR robot girlfriend and trying to forget your dark past. Unfortunately fate and the powers-that-be refuse to let this happen as Mars is under attack by the LEDs (light-emitting demons) and it's up to you to go to the red planet and save the day.

Sounds pretty cool so far, right? Unfortunately the plot is about the only real point of genuine interest in RTX. The idea is sound, but the execution is poor, and sometimes downright terrible. As an example, you begin the game on a small moon base just off Mars. It's a tiny thing, full of branching corridors and stuff to collect. Essentially the first twenty minutes of gameplay is spent wandering back and forth, finding the card key to open the card key door, finding the chip to open the ladder hatch and so on. This is not how a game should begin. Silent Hill 3 is a good example of how a game should begin. Big monsters, lots of terror and plenty of action. RTX begins so drearily that many players may find themselves turned off before the 60 minute mark.

This is a pity, too, because RTX does get slightly better. Once you've cleared the moon base it's off to Mars where you can fight enemies out in the open. This is where things really start cooking, right? No, wrong again. The lock-on gun system is so fiddly, needlessly complicated and downright dodgy that there is very little joy to be had in the combat. The fact your enemies are goofy Space Invaders that look like evil Mardi Gras floats doesn't help matters either. So, after shooting some baddies, indulging in some platform jumping with appalling collision detection you find yourself guess where? That's right! Another base. With more corridors, key collecting and wandering around uselessly.

Perhaps five or six years ago RTX Red Rock may have seemed like a fun little action/adventure but today it just seems dull. If you're really hankering for a space adventure try Run Like Hell. Sure RLH is far from perfect, but at least it's loads of fun and that, sad to say, is something RTX never manages to be. **Anthony O'Connor**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	05	Crisp but totally devoid of character
Sound	05	Typical bleeps and pings. Yawn
Gameplay	04	Hard to control, poor camera, fiddly combat
Life span	03	Gamers will get bored before they finish it

RTX brims with potential. Unfortunately, none of it is realized, resulting in a very mediocre title.

05

ME, MYSELF AND EYE

EZ's bionic eye isn't half as cool as the Terminator's, but it does colour the screen in four stylish hues. Holding **RTX** flicks into your eye's secondary function and fills the screen with useless information.



BETTY BLUE

Electro-scan turns the screen blue and identifies electrical items by making them glow bright green. It also points out assorted other rubbish to keep you on your toes. That's some sort of... crate, you say? And that's a piece of junk? Astounding stuff.



SEEING RED

Helpfully, the bio-scan tells you whether the spindly-legged thing shooting at you is an alien or a colonist. More importantly, it shows invisible enemies. Activate it when you go into a new area (sometimes an old area) or you take your life in your hands.



THE COLOUR PURPLE

Purplevision (thermo-scan to you) lets you see through walls. Not as handy as you'd think. It also identifies life-forms but then, red-vision does that anyway.

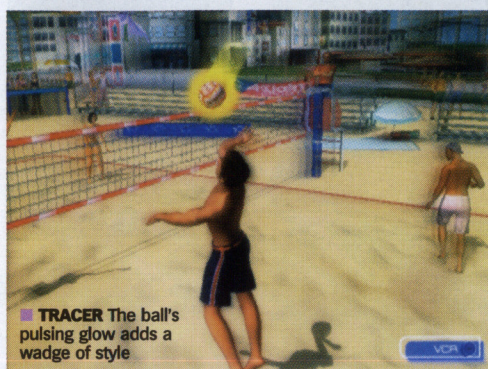


GREEN EYES, MONSTERS

The green navi-scan's secondary function uploads maps as Iris finds them, meaning that you'll be using it all the time. Use it outside and your oxygen still drains while you're trying to work out where you have to go. Ingenious.



PEOPLE THANG There's a vast number of characters on offer, each with differing stats. We go on looks, naturally



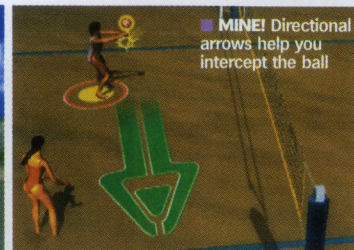
TRACER The ball's pulsing glow adds a wedge of style



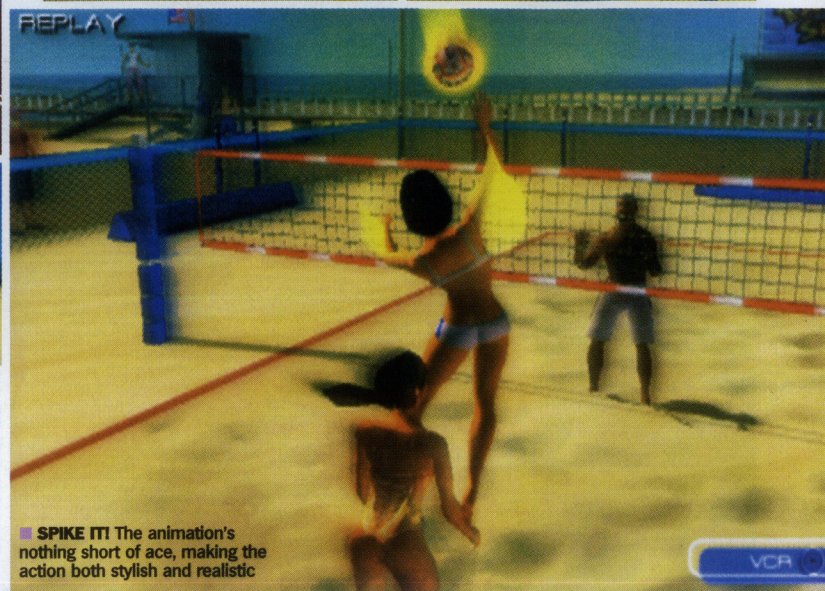
FIREBALL There's nothing like a power serve to scare your foe



AND AGAIN The dynamic action replays are a joy



MINE! Directional arrows help you intercept the ball



SPIKE IT! The animation's nothing short of ace, making the action both stylish and realistic

PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM
DEVELOPER: ACCLAIM
CHELTENHAM
PRICE: \$69.95
PLAYERS: 1-4
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE:
WWW.ACCLAIM.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: YES
PERIPHERALS: MULTITAP

BACK STORY

Acclaim's Cheltenham studios does have a lot of experience under its gaming belt. Along with the PS2 version of Crazy Taxi, they've also got a few good 'uns in the pipeline, including XGRA, Alias and 18 Wheeler.



SUMMER HEAT BEACH VOLLEYBALL

Take a trip to the beach without leaving home. Speedos optional



In the wake of the reputation that Xbox's pneumatically chested *Dead Or Alive Beach Volleyball* left behind (and given the fact that this game comes from the publisher that brought us *BMX XXX*) it's kind of hard to take the idea of *Summer Heat Beach Volleyball* seriously. Surely all it can be is some kind of fatuous digital boob-fest, stapled to a largely irrelevant game, right?

Not in this case. Okay, so there's a measure of unfeasible gravity-defying flesh jiggle, but unlike its *DOA*-based peer, *Beach Volleyball* isn't built purely around some perceived need for the player to ogle at polygonal lady bumps. It's actually a decent crack at making a game out of a sport that hasn't really taken root as a videogame; at least, not to the extent of other sports.

NET GAMER

The reason it is a pleasure to play lies in the control system. As a ball sails over the net towards you, you have choices. The first is whether you're going to tackle the shot yourself or leave it for your partner. But it's not just a case of hoping they intercept the ball if you don't. While you directly control one player (moving around the court, passing and shooting, etc) you also indirectly control your partner. As you shimmy around the court, your partner reacts to your movements, taking up a position to cover the areas of the court you can't reach. In this way, you can generally keep your half of the court covered, and choose whether you want to take the shot or leave it to your partner.

When it comes to handling the ball, you have even more choices – spike it up for your partner to shoot or

thwack it over the net yourself. This is where your reflexes come into play, as the earlier you choose your shot and the longer you hold down the appropriate command, the more accurate and effective your shot will be. Make a last-minute choice, just as the ball's about to clip your hands, and you'll make a pass that your partner will have to work for, or worse, you'll take a punt that will end up nowhere near where you wanted it to go.

And it looks great, too. This has as much to do with the animation as it does the graphics – the character models leap, dive and serve in a gratifyingly realistic way. But ultimately, *Summer Heat Beach Volleyball* is a pick-up-and-drop affair; the kind of game you can play for short frantic bursts, then shelve again for something a little more demanding in the attention department. There's no shortage of game modes, stacks of costumes to unlock, and entire summer tours to embark upon, but a lifelong love affair this is not. On the other hand, if – like us – you're after a short, sweet summer romance, you've come to the right place. **Al Bickham**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	08	Dead smooth, assisted by fluid animation
Sound	07	Complimentary Kylie is never a bad thing
Gameplay	07	Compelling, if only in short bursts
Life span	06	An on-and-off affair, but one you'll come back to

The best crack at beach volleyball we've seen, but nothing to really set your gaming soul on fire.

07

BODIES IN MOTION

Good graphics in action: a simple yet rewarding pleasure...



Our lass lines up for a serve. Service is a textbook example of wonderfully dynamic animation.



The camera zooms out when the action's spread across the court, so you can see what's going on.



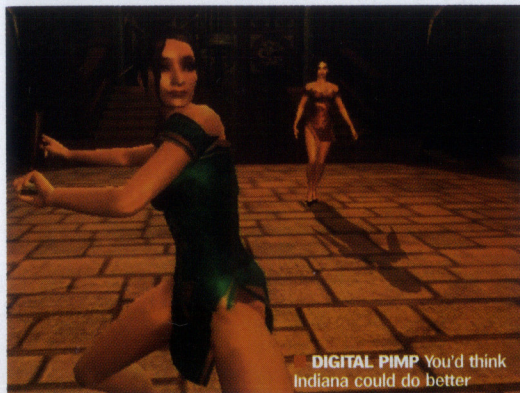
The action replays are simply ace, especially when you get a butter-fingered pile-on like this.



A natty yellow trail follows the ball's passage through the air. It's dead useful – and quite stylish, too.

REVIEW

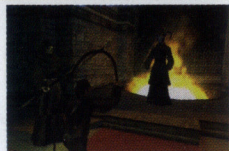
INDIANA JONES & THE EMPEROR'S TOMB



DIGITAL PIMP You'd think Indiana could do better



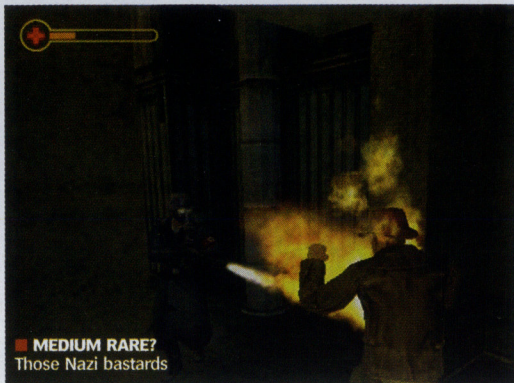
NEAR MISS Why bother ducking when you're wearing a helmet?



LEAP OF FAITH Indy tries the old 'tuck and roll'



LOW TECH When's Indy going to ditch the whip?



MEDIUM RARE? Those Nazi bastards

MAGIC TRICK

It's a shame that the gameplay in *Emperor's Tomb* is let down by an atrocious collision detection system that plagues the entire game. Walk up to any wall and Indy will happily poke part of his head or one of his arms through it. It's surprising that the amount of work obviously put into the fluid animation and nicely detailed environments wasn't applied to the graphics as a whole. Apart from being disconcerting and looking amateurish, in some instances Indy will become stuck in a handrail or some other part of the scenery. Someone pass the Jaws of Life!



INDIANA JONES & THE EMPEROR'S TOMB

Get ready to have some fun with a whip – without getting arrested

PUBLISHER: EA
DEVELOPER: THE COLLECTIVE
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.LUCASARTS.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO
PERIPHERALS: NO

BACK STORY

If the combat scenes look familiar to players who own more than one console, that's because Indy shares his proprietary 3D engine with *Buffy: The Vampire Slayer*, which previously appeared on Xbox.



Call us jaded but *OPS2* reckons that, despite all the assurances, a fourth *Indiana Jones* movie just isn't going to happen. Although rumours abound about a July 2005 release date (in the US), shooting hasn't even started yet. Harrison Ford is in the longest mid-life crisis in history, Steven Spielberg doesn't want to damage his serious director rep now that he's finally got one, and George Lucas is devoting all his time to completely ruining the *Star Wars* franchise. Still, if you're a fan of the series, this game should do enough to satisfy the cravings until you become another cynics like us.

In *Emperor's Tomb* players assume the role of whip-cracking Indy as he sets out to locate an ancient Chinese artefact. Of course, its circa 1935 and having come in second in the race for the Ark of the Covenant and the Holy Grail, the Nazis are back and hoping that the third time's the charm.

For the most part the contrived storyline feels like little more than a device to move the gameplay along and the ordinary-looking cut-scenes don't exactly lend credibility. Still, if you enjoyed the movies, you'll probably feel right at home here. The game has a pleasant cinematic feel, helped in large part by some excellent theme and background music, as well as voiceovers from an actor who sounds uncannily like Harrison Ford.

Apart from the initial training level, which takes place in Ceylon, the other nine missions transport players to locales such as China, Prague, and Istanbul. While the scenery might change, the gameplay generally remains the same throughout. The usual mix of puzzle-solving, combat and 3D platforming elements are integrated well.

In terms of difficulty, the puzzle elements don't exactly tax the grey matter but then again, they don't throw in many frustrating treks for hidden levers either.

Indy has a wide range of moves at his disposal, all of which can be easily executed with the intuitive controls. The excellent physics engine also makes combat entertaining. Apart from using otherwise innocent-looking pieces of furniture to beat up enemies with, Indy can also throw them off ledges or use his whip to disarm them. While enemy AI is a bit weak, there are some more difficult, and interesting, end-of-level bosses to do battle with.

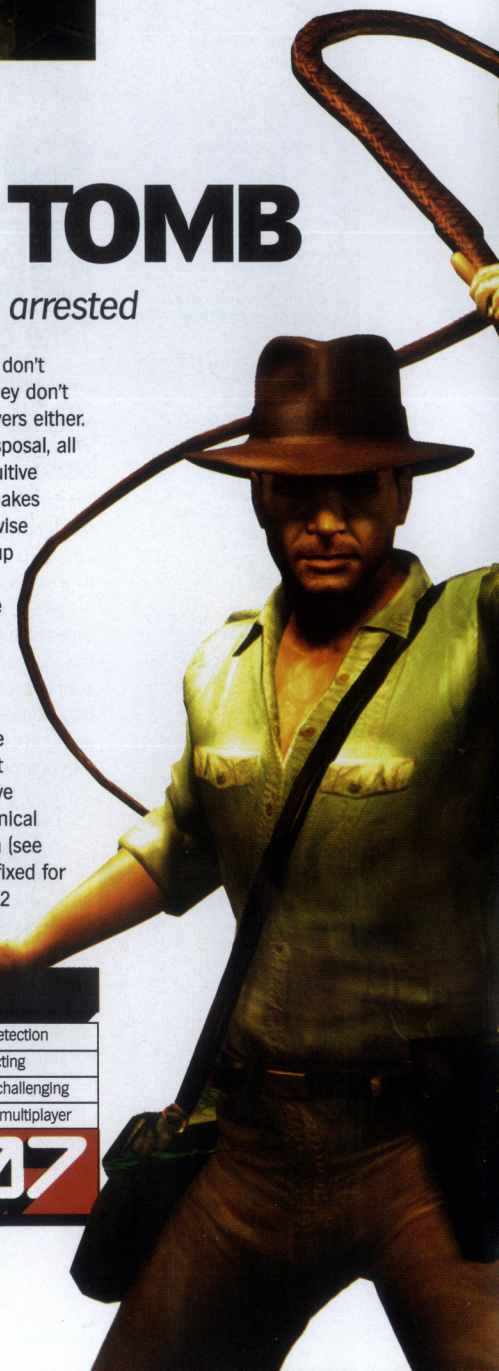
Emperor's Tomb is a solid 3D platformer that makes good use of a well-known licence but just doesn't do quite enough with it. A bit more diversity and extra challenge would have improved things markedly. It's the awful technical faults which really let the game down though (see Magic Trick). The bugs have reportedly been fixed for the PC version but that's cold comfort for PS2 gamers. **Derek Lee**

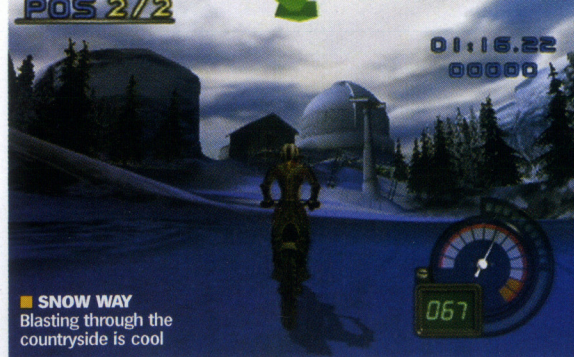
OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	05	A mixed bag with shocking collision detection
Sound	08	Cinematic BGM and excellent voice acting
Gameplay	08	Solid in most respects but not overly challenging
Life span	05	Only 10 missions, a little easy, and no multiplayer

High adventure 3D platform gaming let down by some unforgivable technical issues.

07





SX SUPERSTAR

Mud-covered arcade racer that puts the dirt back into dirtbiking

X If we're completely honest, the motocross racing genre reached a creative plateau some 17 years ago with the success of Sega's arcade classic *Enduro Racer*. Okay, so the graphics have taken quantum leaps since then, but essentially it's the same. The playing experience still amounts to little more than mounting a bike and leaving your opponents eating dirt. Everything else is just gravy.

Acclaim clearly knows this to be a fundamental truth, which explains why it's been so keen to concentrate on *SX Superstar*'s unique championship mode. Career modes in racing titles are nothing new, but few have explored the concept as extensively. Alongside the more commonplace cash rewards, *SX Superstar* also gives your alter ego an elementary existence away from the track.

So far so familiar, but in your grimy pad is a snap of your equally grim girlfriend Barbara. Start scoring points on the track and the better you'll score off of it. The upshot of which is that you'll be trading in your woman

for a better model as often as you will your bike.

SX Superstar is an easy game to get to grips with but by the same token it's also not a difficult one to master. Despite the inclusion of bespoke baja (or off-road), stunt challenges and bikes to vary the pace, experienced petrolheads should be able to dispense with the championship mode in hours rather than days. **□ Dan Silver**

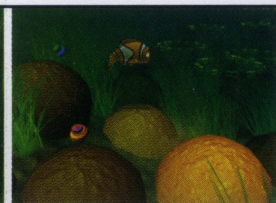
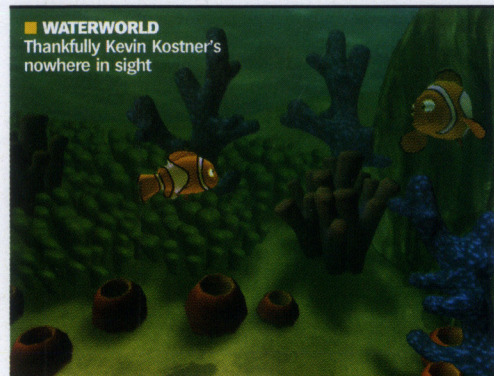
OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	07	Superb scenery that shifts at some speed
Sound	06	Functional FX accompanied by so-so nu-metal tunes
Gameplay	07	High-octane racing thrills from the get go
Life span	04	Measured in days rather than weeks

An above average arcade racer that's let down by a lack of a lasting challenge and comball career mode.

06

PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM
DEVELOPER: CLIMAX
PRICE: \$49.95
PLAYERS: 2
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.AKAACCLAIM.COM/SXSUPERSTAR/INDEX.HTML
60HZ MODE: YES
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO



■ WATER SPORTS
Go, Nemo. Get those bubbles!

FINDING NEMO

Will THQ's new kids' title sink or swim?

X *Finding Nemo* is the new animated feature from Pixar, the critically acclaimed team behind the two *Toy Story* movies, *A Bug's Life* and *Monsters Inc.* Naturally the videogame translation has been designed to appeal to younger gamers; with simple gameplay mechanics and colourful visuals being the order of the day.

With the exception of Sega's *Ecco the Dolphin* series, few developers have visited the depths of underwater videogaming. Consequently, the developer of *Finding Nemo* has taken a lot of cues from the popular porpoise, replicating the basic dash moves and swimming for air bubbles-based gameplay.

Of course, Nemo is a fish, so he doesn't need air to breathe. Instead air bubbles are used as a means to trap enemies such as crabs and clams, so that they can be charged into and destroyed. The game consists of 2-D environments presented in a 3-D perspective. While the aquatic environments look quite spacious, they are actually quite confined and linear. Which is not a bad thing when it's a game targeted at young children.

However, *Finding Nemo* isn't always easy, with

some levels requiring well-honed reflexes that may frustrate the little 'uns. Fortunately Nemo has infinite lives, so you can quickly learn the levels by repetition.

Finding Nemo has a heap of old fashioned puzzles to break up the basic collect 'em up nature of the gameplay. The puzzles are a welcome addition as they are challenging, yet simple enough to be enjoyable for kids.

Featuring plenty of cut-scenes from the film, strong voice acting and reasonably attractive underwater environments, *Finding Nemo* is more than adequate as a game for your younger sibling. **□ Tristan Ogilvie**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	07	Looks good but it won't get you wet
Sound	08	Fish'd love it if they could hear
Gameplay	06	Simple but enjoyable enough
Life span	07	Longer than most of our attention spans

A decent title for younger gamers, but by no means does it brave new waters.

06



PUBLISHER: THQ
DEVELOPER: TRAVELLER'S TALES
PRICE: \$79.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.THQ.COM/FINDINGNEMO
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: YES



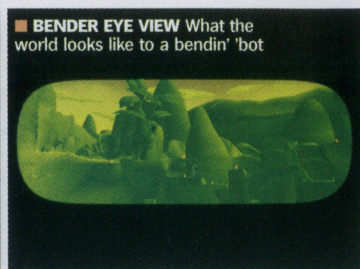
■ **SMASH 'N' CARRY** *Futurama* is packed with secret and not-so-secret areas



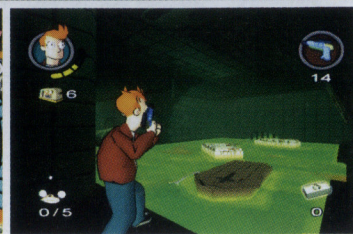
■ **TWIST BENDER!** Bender has a special spin attack



■ **SUD OFF** Fry starts off with a hammer but ends up with laser rifles and machine guns



■ **BENDER EYE VIEW** What the world looks like to a bendin' 'bot



■ **LOCH MESS** Once in the sewer, floaters take on a whole new meaning...

BACK STORY

Futurama is a cartoon series created by Matt Groening, the genius behind the longest running cartoon series ever, *The Simpsons*. Sadly, *Futurama* never enjoyed the mainstream success of its older brother, lasting only 5 seasons or 72 episodes in total before it was officially canned in 2002.

PUBLISHER: ATARI
DEVELOPER: UDS
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.FUTURAMATHEGAME.CO.UK
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

FUTURAMA

OPS2 is welcomed to the so-called world of tomorrow...



Despite the universal popularity of the television series, videogames based on *The Simpsons* – without exception – are always as enjoyable as a visit to Patty and Selma's.

By association, the *Futurama* game was met with an ominous sense of trepidation when it crash landed into the *OPS2* office.

At first glance our fears seemed to be as misinformed as a diagnosis from Dr. Zoidberg. *Futurama* features a vibrant cel-shaded aesthetic, film quality voice acting and fairly solid platform-based gameplay. The plot, while not particularly inspired, is as outlandish as anything you'd expect from the show, and the self-referential gags and in-jokes come thick and fast throughout the entire game.

The game starts off with the evil matriarchal organisation, Momcorp, having just bought the Planet Express business, increasing its ownership of Planet Earth to over 50% – thus making its owner, Mom, the ruler of the planet. Through the game's 20-something levels it's up to you to take control of Fry, Bender and Lella (and briefly Zoidberg) for the running, jumping and collecting of stuff in several interplanetary locales.

THE RIGHT STUFF

The game successfully blends several genres into the mix, from on-rail shoot 'em ups to the *Crash Bandicoot*-style 'outrun a giant boulder' levels. The three main characters offer contrasting styles of gameplay; Fry is gun-based, Lella relies on hand-to-hand combat and Bender is more of a classic platform game cocktail of spin attacks and double jumps.

In spite of the developer's efforts you don't need Professor Farnsworth's Smell-O-Scope to spot the fetid flaws within the game. The levels are far too long,

seemingly fleshed out for the sake of it. So much so that at times the game can be quite dull and repetitive, with many bland and nondescript locations appearing. Yes, it is cool to run around the Planet Express headquarters, full of interactive switches and uniquely hilarious set pieces. But no, it is not fun to walk into the fifth identical room in a row in the sewers of New York. It's enough to drive a man to hit the Slurm, hard.

And nothing says 'frustrating gameplay' as annoyingly as a good old instant death. At regular intervals throughout the game you will be grabbed by some unforeseen tentacle, pulled off screen and be back at the restart point before you can blink. Leaving your remaining life tally one the poorer for it.

And the less said about Fry's targeting system the better. You can't physically cycle through multiple targets, so you just have to repeatedly press the target button and hope it aims at the right enemy when there are several onscreen.

Blemishes aside, *Futurama* is a must have for any die-hard fan of the series, if only for the quality of the gags. The sporadically enjoyable gameplay will leave everyone else hungrier than a Nibblonian on a diet. □ **Tristan Ogilvie**

EXCRETED THE OLD FASHIONED WAY

Each loading screen in the game has a new advertisement from the *Futurama* universe, from basic ads for Slurm to more obscure 'Tri-curious?' alien sex ads. Progressing through the game unlocks these ads, along with the FMV cut-scenes and music tracks so that you can revisit them at your leisure.

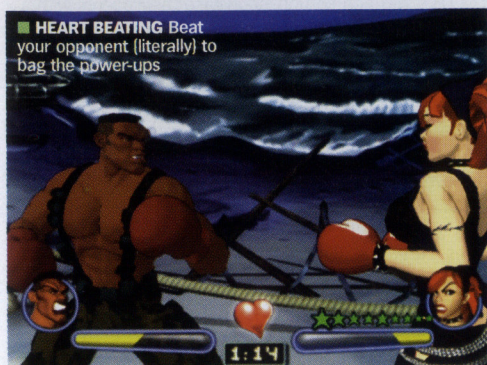
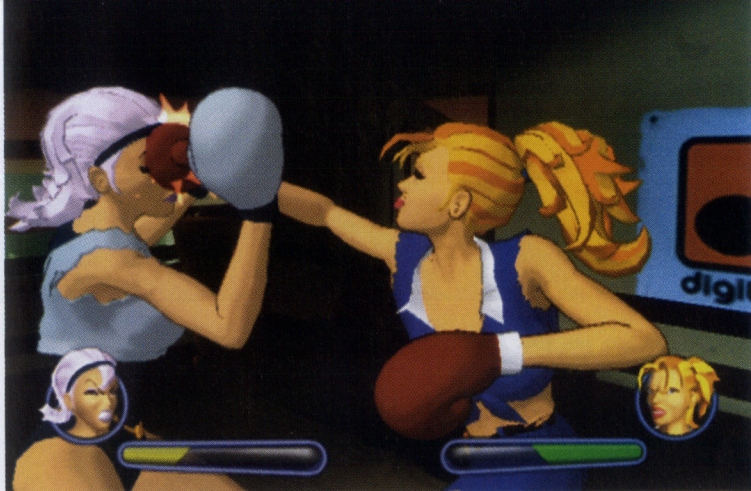


OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	08	Like watching the show
Sound	09	Great voice acting and excellent effects
Gameplay	06	Seldom exciting, mostly average
Life span	07	Script is strong enough to make it a lost episode

With a bit more of polish this could have been shinier than Bender's metal ass.

06



■ **IT'S A CROCK-OUT**
Get back on your feet by whacking ☒

PUBLISHER: VIVENDI
DEVELOPER: DIGITAL FICTION
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.BLACKANDBRUISED.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

■ BACK STORY

This isn't Digital Fiction's first boxing game – it previously produced a similar title called *Boxing Fever* for a certain popular hand-held device. That game was a TKO for pugilism fans – will Digital Fiction be able to hold its own now it's fighting with the big boys on PS2?

BLACK & BRUISED

Bosomy Playmates challenge the local psychiatric ward



In an effort to create the same sort of cheap thrills as the classic boxing game *Punch Out*, developer Digital Fiction has released *Black & Bruised*, a cel shaded arcade boxing bust-em-up for PS2. Graphically they've succeeded in making an eye catcher, but gameplay wise it fails to deliver anything approaching a killer blow.

While you can get away with creating a 'brain free zone' of a game when aiming for an arcade-style blast, *Black & Bruised's* boxing mechanics are so skull-numbingly dull that it's overall sophistication falls below even that forgiving scale. *B&B* offers plenty of attacking combos, punches and power-ups to deal out carnage with, but the big problem is that the game lacks any satisfying method for defence. Sure you can block both high and low, but *B&B's* over-stylised gameplay makes it impossible to estimate where the next strike is headed. So, out with the defence, then? Pretty much. The best method for defending is to come out swinging like a Rugby forward who's just been groped and try and knock the other twit out first. Bouts often go feral, turning into a random hall of swinging fists. The entertainment lifetime of this can be measured in minutes.

IT'S GOT THE LOOK

At least it looks good. *Black & Bruised* combines smooth cel shading over 3D character models with stunning backgrounds to great effect, making the graphics the title's standout feature. The character designs are laughably extreme though.

Either Digital Fiction has indulged in a steady diet of porno films or Russ Meyer has ditched filmmaking and is now working as a videogame character designer. The cast of eighteen boxers includes a pharaoh, a Mexican gimp, an Irish brawler, a fat mustached

European and a slew of young, top-heavy female boxers. All they're missing is a pool cleaner. The innuendo peters through into the sound department when bondage girl Holly Vixen cites phrases like "I'm gonna blow your gasket" or "kiss my pistons". Indeed.

The game features the stock-standard modes but they're starting to feel a little too familiar. There's the simple bout for one or two players, Survival, Tournament, Training and Boxer's Life modes to round off the familiar main options. Unfortunately *Black and Bruised's* take on these modes seems to be a strictly no-frills affair. Boxer's Life should be the beef of the game, but instead it just strings six preset matches together with a short FMV in order to add some useless narrative motivation to the ensuing fight.

The power-up system (where a power-up appears on screen and the first fighter to land enough blows nabs it) is unique but only serves to encourage random button bashing as you desperately try to win that health power-up or instant knockout. Meanwhile the camera whirls around in an effort to keep things looking interesting and show off the artists' hard work – usually at the expense of your ability to actually land blows.

There are no big choices or customization to be found here at all, apart from being able to select an alternate outfit for your boxer. This scarcity of options, depth and substance sums up the game's shortcomings quite well, really. □ James Ellis

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	07	Nice cel-shading, but that's nothing new these days
Sound	06	Abundant voice acting ruined by a fetid script
Gameplay	03	Repetitive and pointless
Life span	05	A decent portion of an average videogame

Not funny enough, not clever enough, not anything enough. Expect to see this 'pre-owned' in a shop near you.

05

SHITE CLUB

There are 19 characters in *B&B*, each with their own 'story'. All of them are brilliantly hilarious, obviously...



EGYPTIANS!
Some people would never hit a lady. Fortunately this bloke has no such qualms.



THE IRISH!
This ginger fool is the game's Irish character and – get this – he's drunk.



FAT CRIMINALS!
As if the fat weren't funny enough already, this bloke is a convicted felon to boot.



HULKING MAN BEASTS!
Each character has their own reason for fighting – all of them pointless.



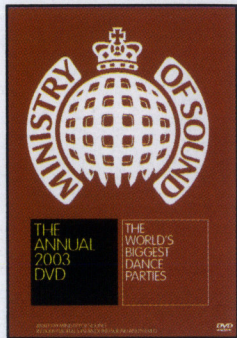
LADY MECHANICS!
One minute she's tinkering with cars, the next she's punching blokes' heads in.

dvdreviews

Recommended viewing for your PlayStation 2 cinema system.

Ministry Of Sound – The Annual 2003

Director: Myles Cooper and Margee Brown - Phot Planet Films **Starring:** Fergie, Paul Van Dyk, DJ Danny Howells, and FREQ Nasty **Distributor:** Warner Vision **Out:** Now **Price:** \$34.95

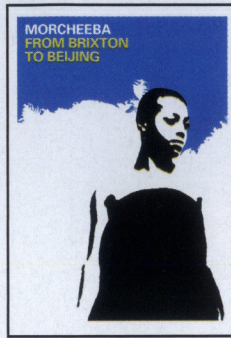


FILM: The idea of watching others clubbing while sitting on your couch at home is a little depressing but this DVD is actually very up-lifting. Experience Ministry of Sound tunes over a 72 minute audio visual global trip, or VJ Graphical mix. It's the ideal soundtrack for a party, or to get you in the mood before going out clubbing. Just like the CDs... but with moving pictures! **7/10**

EXTRAS: Take a trip around the globe behind the scenes to see sweaty, happy, beautiful, high people dance and talk it up - from Ibiza to Florida. **6/10**
VERDICT: A feel good DVD, adding nice visuals to the beats of Ministry of Sound. ☐ RM

Morcheeba - From Brixton to Beijing

Starring: Sky Edwards, Paul Godfrey, Ross Godfrey **Distributor:** Warner Vision **Out:** Now **Price:** \$34.95



FILM: UK's 'trip-hop combo' showcase their talents with a live performance at the infamous Brixton Academy in November of 2002. In a world full of manufactured pop, it's comforting to know there are still bands out there that write music primarily for their own enjoyment. Highlights include the guest appearance of Kurt Wagner (from Lambchop) and a jam style band intro followed by crowd favourite and cross-over hit Rome Wasn't Built in a Day. Groovy! **8/10**
EXTRAS: 24 minutes of behind-the-scenes footage from the bands tour to Beijing earlier this year. See the band flee in hysterics from over enthusiastic merchants selling cheap watches. Classic! **6/10**

VERDICT: If you like Morcheeba, you'll love this DVD. ☐ RM

HIP HOP VIP's

Starring: Dr Dre, Aaliyah, JA Rule, Snoop Dogg, and many more
Distributor: Warner Vision **Out:** Now **Price:** \$34.95



FILM: Bling, bling, money ain't no thang! WARNING! If you cannot speak jive, you will struggle with this DVD. See rappers including Dr. Dre, NAS, Snoop Dogg, Xzibit, and JA Rule behind the scenes, and in their own environment (read, off their chops). Discover their favourite drinks, how they like touring and how much they think 'the game' has changed over recent years. It's definitely interesting stuff but casual hip-hop fans

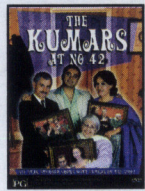
need not apply. **6/10**

EXTRAS: The bare minimum - two trailers. With so many great rappers appearing on this DVD, the lack of features is really disappointing. Snoop would be turning in his crib. Or something. **3/10**

VERDICT: A DVD that's best suited to the hardcore fans, with little replay value. ☐ RM

The Kumars At No.42

Director: Lissa Evans **Starring:** Snajeev Bhaskar, Vincent Ebrahim, Indira Joshi, Meera Syal **Distributor:** Warner Vision **Out:** Now **Price:** \$34.95



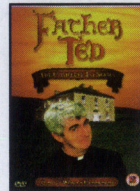
FILM: Bizarre domestic humour, in the tradition of cutting-edge British comedy. Real life celebrities think they're appearing on a proper chat show, and learn too late that they're to be grilled by a fictitious family of Indian immigrants. A bit like *Greeks On The Roof*, but with higher production values and All G style surprise journalism. The novelty had a short shelf life, but it was fun while it lasted. **6/10**

EXTRAS: Around 20 minutes of material that was culled from the show, including close-up shots of esteemed guests being shocked and confused by the Kumar's probing. Richard E Grant even reveals the identities of some famous Hollywood coke addicts, though their names are bleeped out. **7/10**

VERDICT: An excellent DVD edition with plenty of extras, but the source material is just a little too disposable. ☐ DJ

Father Ted - Season 1

Director: Andy DeEmmony, Graham Linehan, Declan Lowney **Starring:** Dermot Morgan **Distributor:** Warner Vision **Out:** Now **Price:** \$34.95



FILM: One of the more entertaining and original comedy shows to come out of the 1990s. Father Ted's surreal misadventures are hardly a tourist ad for Ireland, but by following the dumb-and-dumber formula they deliver a solid bevy of farcical laughs. Full of memorable characters, like the deranged alcoholic Father Jack. **8/10**

EXTRAS: A series as self-explanatory and low budget as *Father Ted* doesn't need much in the way of extras, but they could have done a bit better. The commentary track is a solo job, starring Graham Linehan, one of the two series writers. It's okay, but additional input could have revealed more insights. **7/10**

VERDICT: Not quite up there with *Black Adder*, but still a solid investment for any fan of British comedy. ☐ DJ

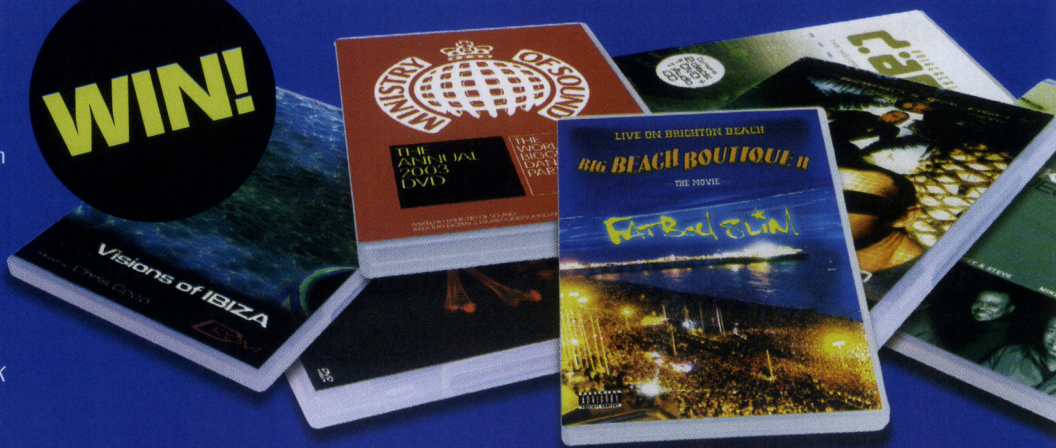
Superstar DJ

Win this awesome dance pack!

Fans of the new *Ministry of Sounds Mix Of Nations* programmes on Fox 8 will be in seventh heaven with this great dance pack, complete with seven of the hottest DVDs. The leader of the pack is *Ministry of Sound's Annual 2003*, the best-selling dance DVD in the world, from the same team behind *Mix of Nations*. Also in the dance pack are six other jam-packed DVDs, including *Fatboy Slim: Big Beach Boutique II*, *Orbital: The Altogether 5.1*, *Nick Warren: Saeed and Palash, Visions of Ibiza Volume 1*, *The UK Garage Project* and *Universal Stories of Dance*. For more information on any of these release just pop along to the Warner Vision website at: www.warnervision.com.au

To be in the running for a pack, just answer this simple question: "What's your favourite *Ministry of Sound* track?". Follow the competition entry details (to your right) and mark your entries "Dance Fever". We've got two packs to giveaway so start writing now!

WIN!



HOW TO ENTER - Send entries to OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au with the name of the competition in the subject line or alternatively, send envelopes via snail mail to: Official PlayStation 2 Magazine, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 2022. Email entrants are entitled to one email per competition only. Entries should be clearly marked and include: The name of the comp, your name, age, phone number and address. All competitions close September 20, 2003.
Note: Images of prizes as shown above may vary from the appearance of the actual prizes received due to circumstances beyond the publisher's control.

Insomnia

Director Christopher Nolan Starring Al Pacino, Robin Williams, Hilary Swank, Martin Donovan
Distributor Buena Vista Out Now Price \$34.95 Extras Commentaries, 'Making Of...' documentaries



FILM: Top cop Will Dormer can't get any sleep. Is it his conscience nagging him about killing his partner or the constant

phone calls from the murderer he's supposed to be hunting down? To make matters worse he's in Alaska and the sun refuses to set. Cue some serious head-messing from Christopher Nolan, the director of the amnesia-thriller *Memento*.

Pacino's in truly great form as the sleepy copper. He's confused, can't trust what he sees and thanks to some mesmerising camera work, neither can we. Perceptions are right out of the window and to cap it all

the murderer announces himself to Dormer as calm as you like. Robin Williams is maddeningly reasonable as the murderous crime novelist Finch who, stuck for material in the wilderness, gets a little inventive.

Nolan and executive producer Steven Soderbergh merrily mash our brains but the plot never amounts to more than a standard serial killer search. Sadly, it isn't long before they surrender to the urge to turn Finch into a proper nutcase, ruining Williams' hard work in so calmly scaring the crap out of us. **8/10**

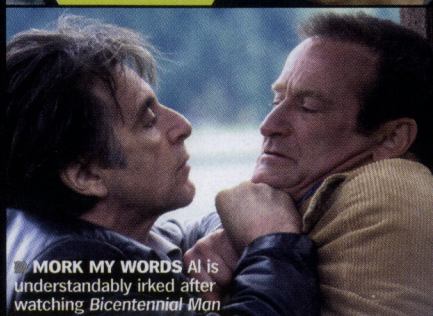
EXTRAS: A wealth of extras. **7/10**

VERDICT: Visually stunning, quietly petrifying. Don't have nightmares now. **MW**

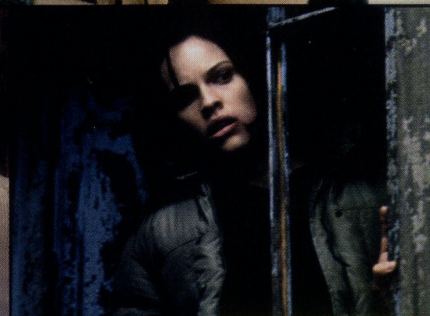


DVD OF THE MONTH

ALL SWANKY "So I just wait here and look all vulnerable-like? Super."

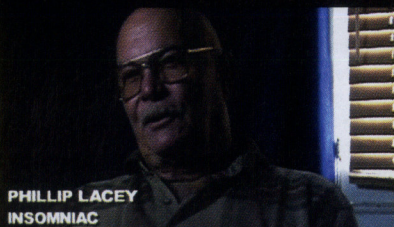


WORK MY WORDS Al is understandably irked after watching *Bicentennial Man*



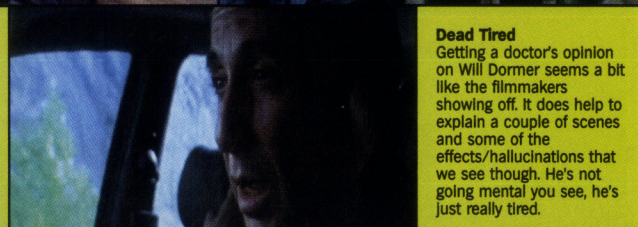
EXTRA! EXTRA!

For those of you who've never had trouble sleeping, meet some of the poor souls for whom warm milk and counting sheep just won't cut it. The *Eyes Wide Open* documentary looks at their ailment and asks sleeping disorder experts about the character of Will Dormer and the implications of *Insomnia*. It's interesting, honest.



PHILLIP LACEY
INSOMNIAC

Poor Old Phillip
Phil hasn't truly had a good night's sleep in the last 30 years. That's 30 years! He appears to be pretty sane though, although he has run his car off the road a couple of times by imagining things that weren't there. What a joker.



Dead Tired
Getting a doctor's opinion on Will Dormer seems a bit like the filmmakers showing off. It does help to explain a couple of scenes and some of the effects/hallucinations that we see though. He's not going mental you see, he's just really tired.



FLY GUY Frank makes good his escape with a load of bags...

Catch Me If You Can

Director Steven Spielberg/Starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Tom Hanks, Christopher Walken, Martin Sheen/Distributor Dreamworks/Out Now/Price \$34.95



FILM: Given that early trailers had teen fraudster Frank W. Abagnale Jr. (DiCaprio) eluding straight-laced FBI agent Carl Hanratty (Hanks) in a whirl of air stewardesses and '60s chic, you'd be forgiven for thinking this is *Down With Love* meets *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*. Wrong. While the story's immediate concern is Leo cavorting around the US cashing fake cheques, there's a tale of broken families, some genuine heartbreak and, in DiCaprio and Hanks, adversaries who speak every Christmas because they've no one else. If you like fun with a side order of darkness, you could do a lot worse. **7/10**

EXTRAS: Casting calls, featurettes, but the real look at Abagnale Jr. and the film makers' liberties is the best stuff. **7/10**

VERDICT: Is this where we say 'catch it if you can'? Yes. **MG**



SOLAR TOAST
George never travels without his toaster

Solaris

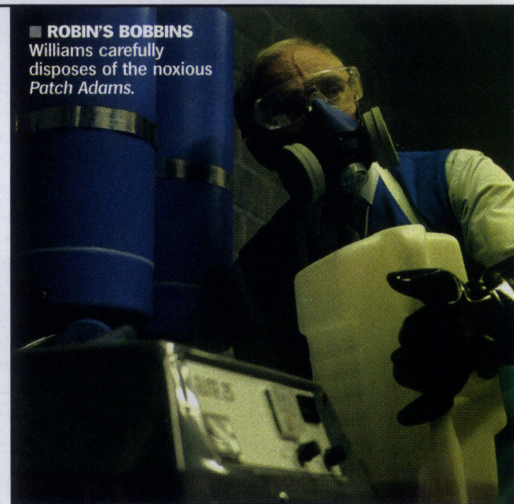
Director Stephen Soderbergh/Starring George Clooney, Natascha McElhone, Jeremy Davies, Viola Davis/Distributor Fox TriStar/Out September/Price \$34.95



FILM: As far as sure-fire Hollywood moneymakers are concerned, poe-faced remakes of obscure, navel gazing, Russian, sci-fi films have to rank pretty low. Even if they do star George Clooney's arse and the bewitching Natascha McElhone. It's testament then to the quality and versatility of director Stephen Soderbergh's output to date, matched by his wisdom in attracting uber commercial James Cameron as producer, that this haunting film feels both arthouse and multiplex-friendly at once. **7/10**

EXTRAS: As well as commentary tracks, you'll also find a lot of behind-the-scenes docs and the full shooting script. **7/10**

VERDICT: Beautifully shot and masterfully edited, this is quality sci-fi for the soul. **PSF**



ROBIN'S BOBBINS
Williams carefully disposes of the noxious Patch Adams.

One Hour Photo

Director Mark Romanek/Starring Robin Williams, Connie Nielsen, Michael Vartan, Eriq La Salle/Distributor Fox/Out Now/Price \$34.95



FILM: Photo lab technician Sy Parrish (Robin Williams) goes from lonely to loony when he develops a twisted obsession for a picture-perfect family whose snaps pass through his One Hour Photo emporium. This promising set-up never amounts to anything more than predictable stalker-thriller fare, but it rises above the mediocre thanks solely to Williams - his creepy, low-key acting ensures that *Patch Adams* can finally be forgiven. **6/10**

EXTRAS: Commentary by the Director and Robin Williams (in serious mode), interviews with the two of them from a US talk show, plus an in-depth *Anatomy Of A Scene*. **6/10**

VERDICT: Robin Williams swaps sentimental for mental in a generic thriller that never quite cranks up the tension. **LH**

postal

This month we talk about being too good at Pro Evo 2, online gaming clans and games for girls.

THE LETTERS ARE FLOODING SO KEEP THEM COMING! IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO ASK OR SAY, WRITE TO US AT: OPS2@DERWENTHOWARD.COM.AU OR SEND SNAIL MAIL TO OPS2, DERWENT HOWARD PTY. LTD, PO BOX 1037, BONDI JUNCTION, NSW 1355. THE WINNER OF THE STAR LETTER EACH ISSUE GETS A GAME - A GOOD GAME - OF OUR CHOOSING. JUST REMEMBER: WE WANT INTELLIGENT, INFORMED LETTERS THAT DON'T ALL TALK ABOUT THE SAME THING. NO FLAMING, NO 'MY CONSOLE'S BETTER THAN YOURS' STUFF, NO 'WHEN IS GAME XXX OUT?' ETC. AND FOR MERCY'S SAKE, USE THE SPELLCHECKER IF YOU SEND YOUR LETTER BY EMAIL - THEN WE MIGHT, TOO. WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO TRUNCATE, HACK AND SLASH YOUR LETTER SEEMINGLY AT RANDOM.



STAR LETTER

FIGHT CLUBS

Some of my friends and I were discussing the amazing possibilities of Internet gaming on PS2 when the question was raised about online 'clans' for

action games like SOCOM and teams for sports games like FIFA. Is there any news of games development companies setting up websites where you can create a clan? There are loads of sites like this on the Net for PC gamers, so will it be a reality on PS2?

Also, have you thought of setting up an OPS2 clan so the guys and gals of the mag can play against your readers?

I think it would be great to kick Richie's ass on SOCOM only to then get taken down by Naz, who was covering him from the top of a nearby building...

Paul, via email

Setting up clans and teams and the like is what makes the idea of online gaming so exciting. That's why most online PS2 games will feature at least a semblance of this. You can set up a clan in SOCOM already and we believe that EA's plans for FIFA, which include instant tournaments and results, will include team playing. And the OPS2 team will certainly be around to offer up some online humiliation soon. Keep reading the mag for dates. We just need a bit more practice...

SMART ARSE

Don't you hate it when you get really good at a game and then your friends moan that you're too good? I have this problem with Pro Evolution Soccer 2.

We get a tourney going and agree to ten minutes a game. But they hate playing me, so when I turn my back they change the time to 20 minutes so they get longer to play each other and I get left out. So I need you to tell me if I should let them win now and again or just let them keep moaning.

Croninho, via email

Perhaps, Croninho, you should remove your head from your arse for a while and actually ask them.

Alternatively, do what we do and play co-operatively instead of one-on-one. It's the best way to play Pro Evo 2.

MCMOAN

Hey, Shane here. I am 16 and a reader of this fab magazine. I have two simple questions. First off, I've got a bone to pick with you guys. It's a proven fact that teenagers from about 12-20 have a faster reaction time than middle-aged men and that the games industry practically revolves

around youngsters because the majority of parents go out and buy games for them. To my amazement, I have discovered that your mag hasn't got any young people testing games - and other mags I read are the same way. Why is this?

Also, I have a job in a fast food joint and get paid, but, unsurprisingly, I can't get a credit card. I am praying that PS2 online doesn't need one. Does it?

Shane Keenan, via email

Kids may have faster reflexes but when it comes to reviewing games experience is king, so respect your elders, Sonny. As for the credit card, SOCOM doesn't require any extra payments, but other games probably will. We'll let you know what the score is on this when the games are released.

GIRLS ALOUD

I am not particularly a 'girly' girl and don't expect Sony to make games about dolls and fairies, but I wondered if Sony would consider making a game about pets or one based on books by popular authors like Jacqueline Wilson? My friends have said the same thing so there are other girls who feel the same as me!

Olivia Swallow, via email

Sorry, Olivia, but sweet baby Jesus we hope not.

A BACKWARD GLANCE

I'm writing in response to Fraser Guthrie's letter in OPS2#16 regarding his anger at PS2's PSone compatibility. Firstly, am I missing something? Is someone forcing Fraser to play PSone games? Anyway, what really concerns me is your response, inferring that the only thing PSone games have to offer now is nostalgia and comparing the people who play them to 'sad sacks' who took about Spectrum games. Are you kidding?

A couple of questions: 1) As there are still excellent games being released on PSone, how can it suddenly be a nostalgia machine? 2) Since the Xbox is technically superior to the PS2, how do you think it would have affected PS2 sales if it hadn't been backwards-compatible with the most popular games console of all time (this being, frankly, its only saving grace)?

I hope that in time PS2 will provide just as much variety as PSone. Stupid numbers of polygons do not make a good game and if Sony is still happy to support PSone games, why can't you?

S Johnson, via email

Well, S, we're not sure what games you had in mind (Baldies, Bratz?) but we will say that with the PSP heading this way, 32-bit gaming

might just have a bit of a renaissance.

XBOX LOVER

I am writing to complain about Issue 15 of your mag. My brother bought the mag and I heard him reading it to himself and he read out: "Publicly smashing up a real Xbox."

I was obviously fuming then, but when I read about Simon and Michael Read, I was even more furious! I have an Xbox.

I always play on it and no one can stop me from its power.

I thought PS2 was a good console. You spoiled that for me but I guess I don't care. I even had an argument with my brother about it. You are unbelievable. You and your PS2 worshippers can go kiss my ass. Your mag bites and, in my opinion, you make PS2 sound even worse than it already is. If it were up to me, I'd take every PS2 and smash them up in PUBLIC. Other than that, I'll leave you to it.

Don't bother telling me to change my attitude either, I think it's you who need to do that. Not many people like N64, so why don't you say how crap that is? I feel like ripping up all my brother's copies of your magazines.

When you said all the nasty things about Xbox in that mag, you didn't think about Xbox fans' feelings, did you? So I ask you, will you NOT mention it again in future? Well, thanks for your time, not like you really care about a true Xbox fan.

Toni, via email

Toni, Toni, Toni... surely you protest too much. You have set yourself apart from the PlayStation 2 nation and are now suffering in isolation. Do yourself a favour and pick up that hammer and start smashing. It'll make you feel so much better. Come on Toni, join us...



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HARDCORE

Taking a baseball bat and breaking big games into little pieces



From the heart of *The Matrix*, to the underground gangland of *Def Jam*, we'll be there, by your side, egging you on. And we'll teach you some cool yo-yo tricks in *Rygar* and demonstrate how to perform the ultimate fists of fury in *The Hulk*. The perfect gaming partner? We like to think so.

R. Young

IN HARDCORE THIS MONTH

084...ENTER THE MATRIX.....GUIDE
090...THE HULK.....CHEATS
090...DEF JAM VENDETTA.....CHEATS
090...METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE.....TIPS
090...RYGAR: THE LEGENDARY ADVENTURE.....TIPS
090...SPEED KINGS.....CHEATS

PUT 'EM UP

ENTER THE MATRIX

Our bullet time bashing pointers will have you kicking with confidence...

I KNOW KUNG FU

The finer points of cracking heads and breaking bones



As far as hand-to-hand combat goes, combos are basically performed by pressing either punch or kick roughly three or four times in quick succession. Holding towards or away (from the opponent) during the combo changes the moves – the exception being toward and kick which always performs a flying kick, useful for knocking people off platforms or smashing through windows. As an example, holding away and pressing **A** four times performs the following punch combo: swinging right fist, right backfist, swinging left fist, left straight/double punch. It's a powerful sequence, but it can also be customised, to some extent. If you tap **A** four times – leaving the analogue stick neutral for the first two, then holding away for the last two – you would seamlessly merge the start of the neutral punch combo (right jab, left straight) with the end of the away punch combo (left swinging fist, left straight/double punch). It sounds complicated, but it just means that all the combos can freely be combined with all the other combos, punches and kicks included – kick, punch, away and punch, whatever you like. When you try punching and kicking during Focus, it all changes. You can only perform two or three hit combos with the analogue stick in neutral, but pushing towards or away still activates more complex – and, obviously, more powerful – sequences. The combos you perform also depend on whether or not you're actively hitting anyone, just to make it even more unpredictable. Experimentation is the key. Some combos end in knocking them away, some smash them straight down, so find your own style. To be honest, just mashing the attack buttons usually works.

ENTER THE MATRIX

■ PLAYERS 1-2
■ MEMORY CARD SPACE 185KB
■ DIFFICULTY MODERATE
■ COMPLETION TIME 15 HOURS
■ REVIEWED OPS2#16

VERDICT

"ETM comes highly recommended. It's one of the finest movie tie-ins out there – if only the gameplay was a little deeper..."

Graphics 09 Overall
Sound 08
Gameplay 07
Life span 08

07

■ **FIRE FLIGHT** They can't see your bullets coming but you can see theirs...



TOP TIPS



MELEE COMBAT

Hand-to-hand fighting basically only involves punching with **△**, kicking with **○**, and throwing by pressing both together. You can also block/defend/counter with **Ⓢ**. The move itself will vary tremendously depending on context; the position of the enemy, the sequence in which you tap punch and kick to create your own combo. When you knock them down, they might still be alive – a simple kick will send them skidding along the floor.

GUNPLAY

Select a weapon from the menu box at the top-right of your screen by pressing **←** and **→**. Unholster it using **Ⓢ** (**Ⓢ** also fires your weapon). You will automatically target enemies, and can carry on firing while running or diving in any direction. Any empty guns are discarded, but reloading is automatic. Armaments include basic pistols, shotguns, machine guns, sniper rifles and a grenade launcher. Which is nice.

FOCUS

This is a limited resource which steadily drains as you hold down **Ⓢ**, but which allows you to essentially operate in bullet time. Some of your combat moves will have different animations and do more damage, and time slows down allowing you to dodge bullets with ease. It will recharge quite quickly, but we'd still advise that you don't let it run out in the middle of a firefight.

■ **A...A...G...H...H...** Death dealing in *Enter The Matrix* is a stylish thing

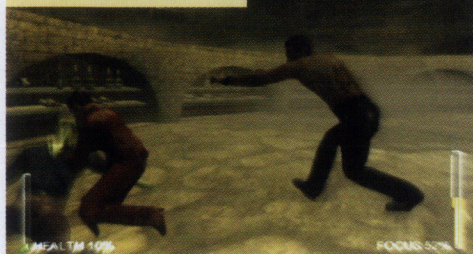


ONE ON ONE

Boss not lying down and staying down? Maximise your pain delivery system here...

At specific points in the game you will face opponents who won't fall down as easily as the endless floods of security guards and SWAT team flunkies. Agents, Vlad, Cujo, Kain and Abel, and Seraph all count as boss-type encounters. You must change strategy for these folk.

■ **TOUCHY FEELY** This guy looks like he'd kill for a big hug with Niobe



VEHICLES

One of the most significant ways in which the gameplay differs when you play with the different characters is when you enter your car. Niobe is the driver and it's her responsibility to find the checkpoints and avoid obstacles. Ghost rides shotgun and utilises a first-person view to destroy pursuing policecars and other threats. Finally, the last section of the game has you inside the Logos itself, in the real world.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

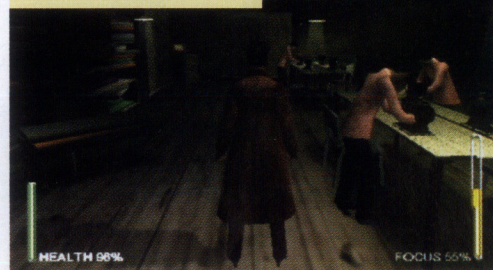


BLOCKING/COUNTERING

When fighting in melee combat, pressing **Ⓢ** will either block a punch/kick, block and counter it with a knock-down strike of your own, or reverse a throw (for tougher opponents). The majority of your time should be spent concentrating on offence rather than defence, especially in close quarters, so you only really need to use **Ⓢ** when in a boss battle.

All-out offense works 99% of the time – this is the other 1%. Named characters just love to block your moves and counter or throw you. They're fast and strong, and in some cases you can't even use the cheeky run-around-in-circles-while-your-health-regenerates trick. You have to be careful with your Focus, too. You are unlikely to win without it, but frittering it away is tantamount to suicide. Get into the habit of using it to initiate a throw or counter move, letting go of **Ⓢ** the second it connects so the rest of the animation takes place in normal time. Spend the first part of the fight getting into position and using careful bursts of Focus to time your blocks. Once you've landed a few satisfyingly good hits and worn them down a little, you can start piling in with combos and throws of your own. Wall kicks seem to work exceptionally well, too. If you get into a rhythm, string together strong moves, and never miss an opportunity to kick them when they're down, you will prevail.

■ **SEW FAR, SEW GOOD?** They look harmless but any one could turn into an agent



CITY DRIVING

Your first time behind the wheel is no easy feat. This'll get you on your way...

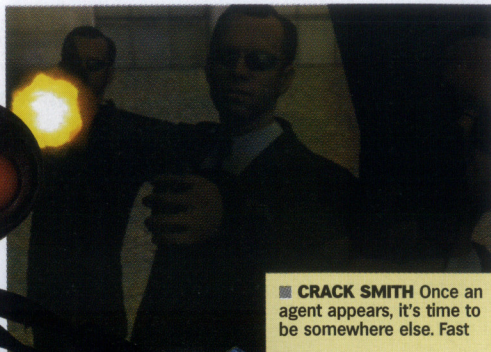
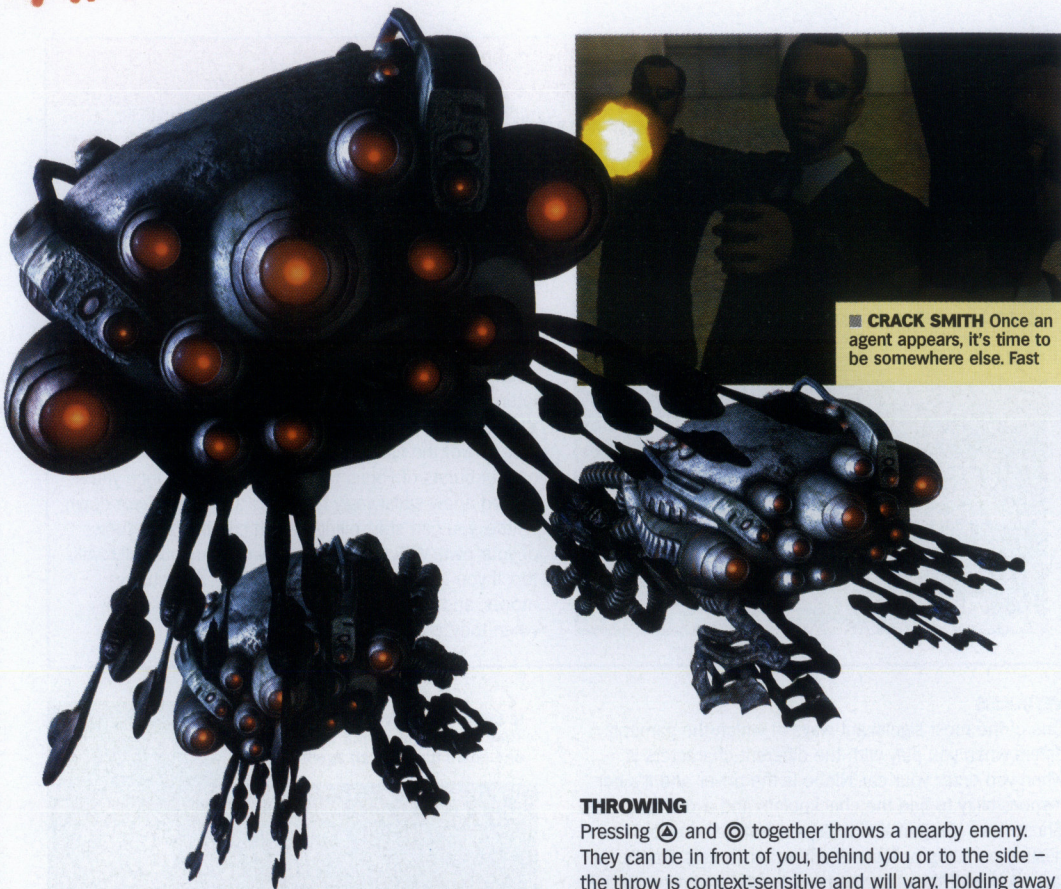
■ **RIDING SHOTGUN** While Niobe takes the wheel Ghost gets to vent some road rage



GET TO THE HARD LINE

The first driving section gives you your first chance to get used to the way the cars handle. All you really have to do is follow the arrow, which is very straightforward, occasionally pressing **Ⓢ**, which makes Ghost pop out of the passenger window and start blazing away at the nearest cop car.

The toughest bit comes just after you get a message saying 'SURVIVE FOR TWO MINUTES'. You should be able to see two sets of lights. You need to get through the second set, but they are all red, and will only open after they have all, one by one, turned green. Luckily there is a circular section of road just to the right of this where you can keep moving and – hopefully – keep alive. Ghost works the same way as your focus bar, and has to recharge when depleted. After two minutes, the barrier will raise and you can drive through to the next subchapter.



■ **CRACK SMITH** Once an agent appears, it's time to be somewhere else. Fast

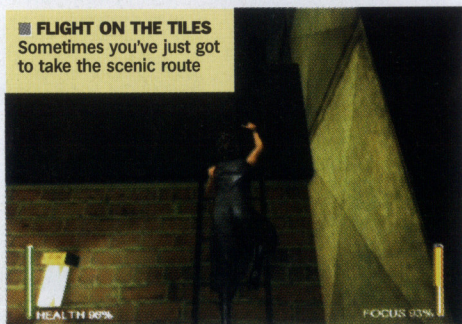
→ DISARMING

Toe-to-toe with someone toting a gun? You're in trouble, right? Not so. Simply press action (Ⓢ) and you'll whip the gun out of their hands and knock them down in a variety of cool animations. This doesn't add the gun to your inventory automatically, you have to walk over it.

CITY ROOFTOPS

Somebody get that phone! It's ringing and you've got to find it. Here's how...

■ **FLIGHT ON THE TILES**
Sometimes you've just got to take the scenic route



GETTING TO THE PHONE

It starts off simply enough (assuming you realise you need to super jump over the gaps). Climb a couple of ladders and open the door leading to the phone. Sadly, there's an Agent standing behind it. From this point on, you RUN. There's no way of killing him, and he just keeps shooting you. The route doesn't really split at any point, although you will crash through a couple of roofs, and some police try to hold you up. If you run past them you'll save time, but not killing them means that the Agent can transport into their bodies and keep up with you quicker. Be prepared for lots of super jumps over gaps – falling down just one of these will kill you and you'll have to start again. Inside one building, just after two cops and around the corner from a large stone staircase, there's a health kit, which you may need.

THROWING

Pressing (A) and (Ⓢ) together throws a nearby enemy. They can be in front of you, behind you or to the side – the throw is context-sensitive and will vary. Holding away as you throw also changes this, as does using Focus. In later levels, where there are quite a few precariously high platforms, these can be used to quickly dispose of foes – however, their gun will go with them. Some of the coolest moves in the game are done when you throw someone with a gun equipped. It's an instant kill move, too.

WALL KICKS

You can only do these while you're Focused, and you need to be fighting an enemy standing near a wall, or even a crate or similar object. Tap towards the wall and press kick. You'll jump against it, turn, and deliver a massive roundhouse to their face, and it seems to kill almost anyone.

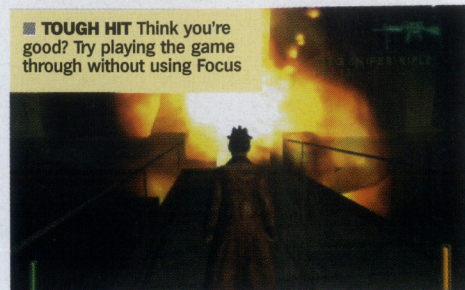
■ **STAKES ARE HIGH** Vlad's tough. We suggest you get to the heart of the matter



CHALLENGES

So, you know kung fu. Big deal. Your next life-changing tasks are as follows...

■ **TOUGH HIT** Think you're good? Try playing the game through without using Focus



AMATEUR

Finish the game with Niobe, in five hours or under.

PRO

Not one for the faint-hearted. Finish the game without firing a single shot. Disarming, throws, counters, are all still allowed.

EXPERT

Think you're tough? We'll see how tough you are when we take away your strongest ability – Focus. Play through in real time only.

COVER

When there are just too damn many police to handle all at once, it's often wise to push against a pillar or wall, thereby flattening yourself against it and taking cover. By pushing to the left and right you will peer around the corners, and if you do this with your gun/s in hand you will be able to open fire as they advance. Alternatively, if you push to the left or right and jump (Ⓢ), you will dive to the side, and can fire simultaneously. This is best done while you are Focused, so you can get as many rounds off as possible.

CARTWHEEL

Similar to performing a dive from behind cover, if you hold down (L) to get yourself Focused, sidestep either using the (L) or (R) button, then press (Ⓢ), you will spectacularly cartwheel through the air, making you extremely hard to hit.

■ **SLOWLY DOES IT**
Use your focus well and you'll be 'nails'



THE AIRPORT



NORTH POINT 2

This can be insanely hard the first few times you try it, so here's the secret. The helicopter will make a first pass to fire at you, so take cover. On his second pass you can fire back with impunity. Lastly, he will drop in a SWAT squad through the roof. Save your focus for these fellows since your health won't regenerate in here, and they can reduce it at an alarming rate with those accursed MP5s. Diving forward or back makes you a smaller target, and cartwheeling would work too, if it wasn't so stupidly hard to execute. You could try grenading them too, if you're confident about your timing. Repeat until one of you is dead – hopefully it will be him.

More SWAT will appear around the corner but your health will have regenerated by now. Move forward using all that free MP5 ammo on them, clear out that glass-enclosed storage room, and head up the stairs.

CONTROL TOWER 2

Watch the plane as it starts to taxi then, when you regain control, zoom in to your left to find it. You have to aim ahead of the tyre, so keep steady, use your focus, and remember you can always try again if you screw up. The agent helicopter is, fortunately, much less of a nightmare than the SWAT one from before – here's what you do. Get behind the closest pillar and peer around to the front of the room, with the heavy machine gun

THE POST OFFICE



GOT IT

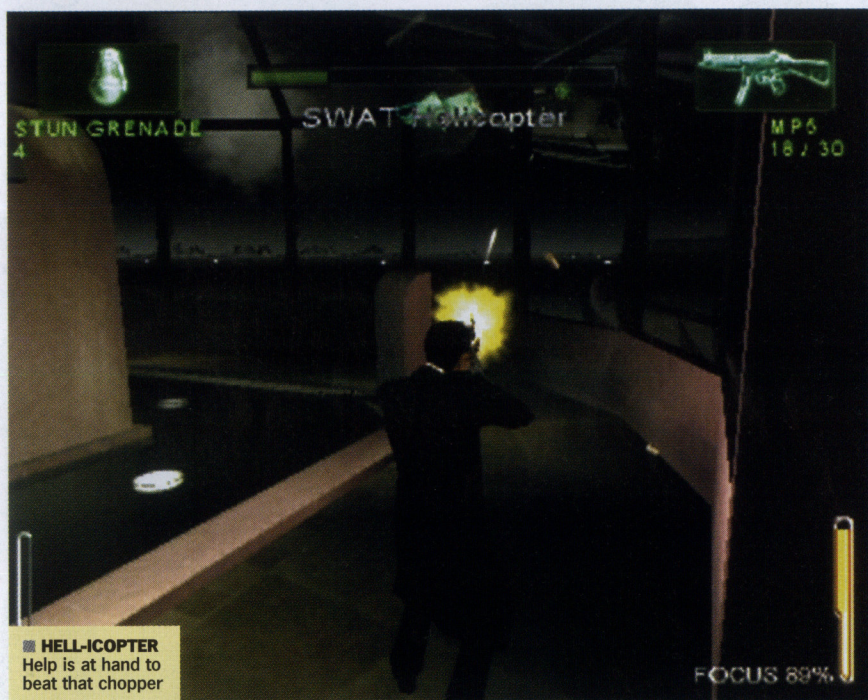
You'll be in the lobby, so head back to the elevator (now all powered up) and up to the second floor, killing innocent people merrily as you go. The package is in the corner, just past a health pick-up and getting to it triggers a cut-scene. Use your focus to clear the room of cops and avoid the tear gas whenever possible. Be warned, your health doesn't regenerate in here. Offing all the cops opens the lift up so you can ride back down to the lobby. Try to open the front doors and whoops – the whole building gets locked down and the lobby floods with some cops who have, for a change, serious hardware. They can whittle your health down surprisingly quickly, so don't mess about, just kill them as quickly as possible. Go to the back of the lobby and head back up the flight of stairs to end the sub-chapter.

CITY ROOFTOPS

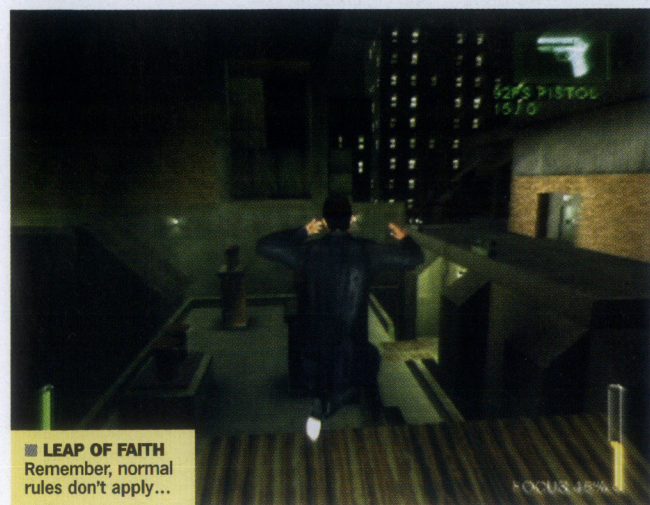


ANSWER THE PHONE

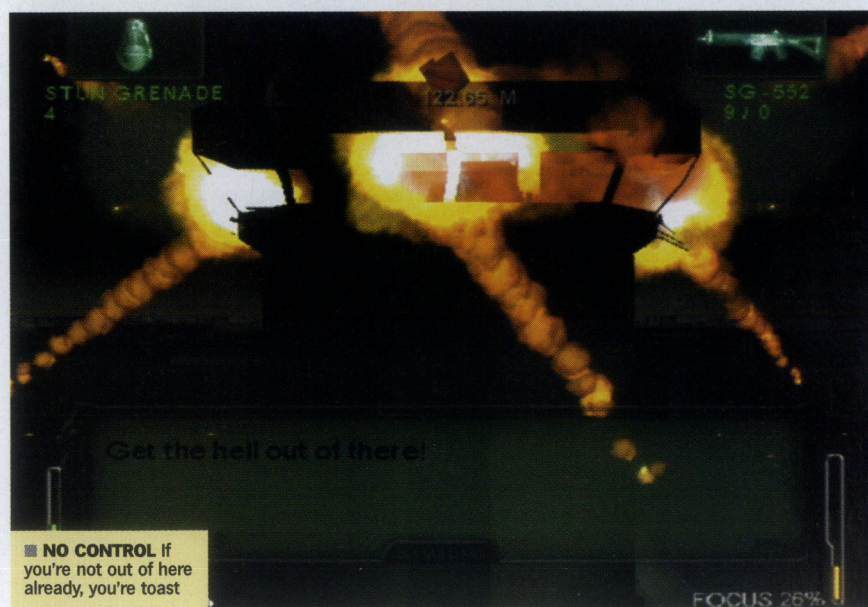
It starts off simply enough (assuming you realise you need to super jump over the gaps). Climb a couple of ladders and open the door leading to the phone. Sadly, there's an agent standing behind it. From this point on you RUN. There's no way of killing him and he just keeps shooting you. The route doesn't really split at any point, although you will crash through a couple of roofs and some police try to hold you up. If you run past them you'll save time but not killing them means that the agent can transport into their bodies and keep up with you quicker. Be prepared for lots of super jumps over gaps because falling down just one will kill you, and you'll have to start again. Inside one building, just past two cops and around the corner from a large stone staircase and you'll discover a health kit, which you may very well need.



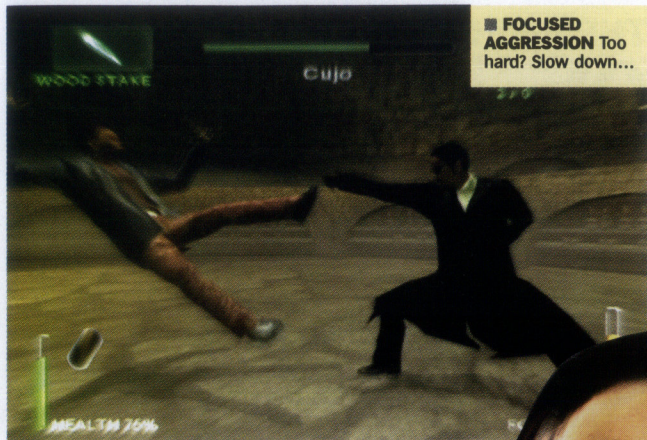
■ **HELL-ICOPTER**
Help is at hand to beat that chopper



■ **LEAP OF FAITH**
Remember, normal rules don't apply...



■ **NO CONTROL** If you're not out of here already, you're toast



■ **FOCUSED AGGRESSION** Too hard? Slow down...

HACKING

Unlock ETM's deepest secrets with this cunning sub-game. Not for nerds...

The hacking sub-game in *Enter The Matrix* is very brief but worth taking an hour to blast through for the cheats you can win, and the extra artwork and hidden goodies you can unlock. If you follow our instructions below to the letter you'll get through it all in record time, and you can then peruse the treasure trove at your later discretion.

When you need to get into a particular directory you can either type it straight into the program (easier if you have a keyboard plugged in) or select it from the command line at the side. We have shown you what to type for each command but you can just as easily use the shortcuts.

1 Press any key when it says 'Press any key' Yes, tricky stuff, we know.

2 Type: LOGIN

3 At the prompt either type: GUEST, FREEMIND or (oddly) COWBOYCURTIS the latter two getting you some message fragments from

Morpheus. Pressing **1** and **2** simultaneously at this point automatically unlocks all the commands and files but that rather takes the fun out of it doesn't it?

4 Type: DIR B:/TOOLS

5 The TOOLS directory is binary encrypted but it's easy to crack. We can't tell you the exact combination because it's random every time

but each of the five digits is either 0 or 1, so typing in 11111, then 11110, then 11100 and so on will gradually let you work it out through a process of elimination.

6 Type: VIRTUAL

7 Enter the password: FROZENFISH

8 You need to flip the tiles until one of two pictures is revealed. You want to make the one pictured below.

9 Type: DIR V:/TOOLS

10 Type: ROOTSEARCH

11 Type: DIR V:/ROOT

12 Type: PORTKEY 942

13 Type: whatever you like in response to Trinity, it doesn't matter.

14 Type: CRACK 8RAM

15 Type: TRAINING RAM:/PROG/SWORD.DSK

This only works if you hack into a save game that you've finished the game with and resetting the machine means you have to go back into hacking and reactivate the program. It only affects your disarm and bare-handed throws.

16 Type: HANDSHAKE

17 Go through Sparks' little rigmarole, use the EMP command, and open up the LOGOS drive as you do so.

You can now go back at your leisure, typing in as many commands as you like to set them to your command list, and exploring the various bits of artwork, gun specifications, maps and so on at your leisure. You can drop weapons into certain levels to give you extra help and you will have unlocked Sparks' training simulation too. These are basically a few little mini-games with which to while away the minutes and can be loaded like you'd load any other level. Lastly, finishing this hack unlocks multiplayer mode, so plug in an extra controller and get cracking.

■ **AXEL EFFIN' HELL** Retrieving Axel is one tough level to beat

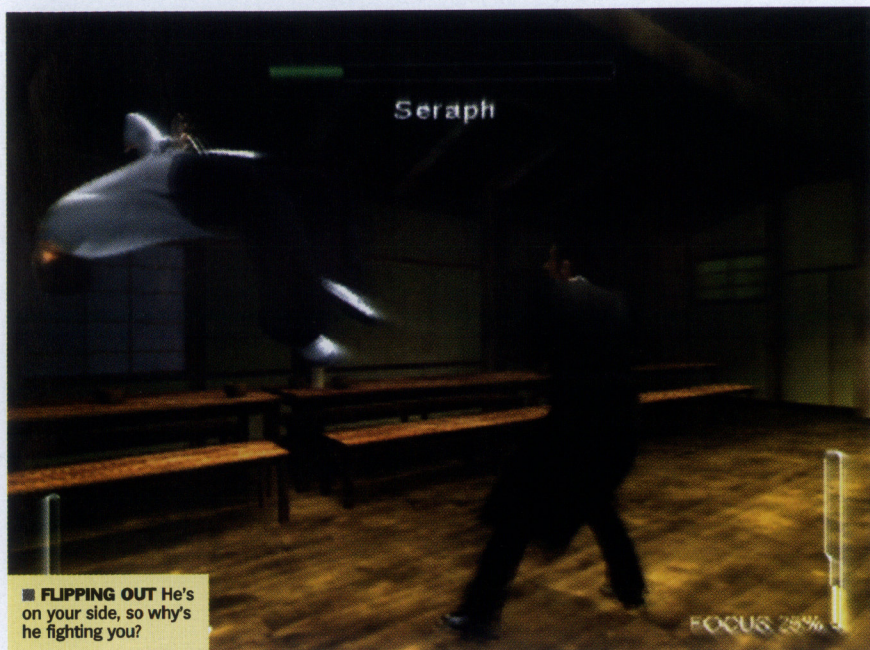


equipped. When the helicopter flies into view, focus up and blast away. You'll take damage but that damn machine will take more. When it flies off, face right, take cover again, and repeat. You'll get badly stung but you will trigger the end of the sub-chapter when it wipes itself out by flying into the control tower.

THE AQUEDUCT

RETRIEVING AXEL

The first half of this driving section is a royal pain in the arse because a single error spells failure. Hit a pillar... start all over again. Hit a crate... begin again. Swerve a little too much when you land after a jump... you've guessed it. Instead, stay on the straight and narrow until Sparks tells you that Axel has jumped out of the plane, and you'll get some police company. You can relax for a moment as the time restriction is lifted and the route is usually pretty straightforward. The last section has you chasing a car full of agents and, again, dawdling too much will fail the mission, so just try not to ram too many stationary objects.



■ **FLIPPING OUT** He's on your side, so why's he fighting you?

THE CHATEAU



THE DUNGEON

Run down the spiral staircase, through the open gate and into the wide-open wine cellar. There's a pair of vampires and a pair of health packs in here. Kill the vamps and run down the stairs into the kind of amphitheatre place. Here is where you face Cujo who isn't even a dog. He's actually considerably easier than Vlad but when you get him to about half health, he will summon a couple of henchvamps and run around the edge shooting at you. Dispatch them post haste and he'll return for more of a drubbing. Watch out for his charged-up, double-fisted attack, which seems to render him invulnerable – just run away. Other than that, it's business as usual. There's only one way out, so take it.



■ **VALET OF DEATH** It'll take more than a wash to fix this car

UNDER THE CITY



TWINS IN PURSUIT

This can be obscenely hard if you try to do it properly – ie, fend the twins off with gunfire, shoot the cop cars and so on. The twin with the gun does a horrendous amount of damage and even though it's a short driving section, he can kill you in moments. However, there's an embarrassing yet useful flaw in the programming whereby if you don't look behind you, the twins can't actually hurt you... it's true. Just clear the road immediately ahead of you by blowing cars in your lane, completely ignore the twins and you'll sail through.

CHINATOWN



SERAPH'S TEA HOUSE

The fight against Seraph is an important one because if you lose here you don't even get to play an important chunk of the game. So make sure you're on top form. Victory will earn you a cut-scene whereas failure sends you straight to the last section, with the Logos hovercraft.

VERTIGO

Run, run, run. Agents are everywhere so keep one eye on your arrow and the other on the screen looking for the way forward. If you get too close to an agent, he's likely to do a cocky one-armed throw on you. As soon as you get up, he'll just as likely throw you again. So instead of trying to run, do a wall jump or something to distract him. You need to find a staircase going up, nip through the window and start running around the outside of the building on narrow planks. It's perfectly possible to find places to stand so that agents can't actually see you, meaning that you can regenerate your health and focus back to full, which you will probably need to do more than once.

At one point the combined weight of you and an agent will cause the planks to collapse down to the next level. From here, work your way steadily down one set of sloping planks and up another until you reach a point where you have to super jump off the end and smash through a window.

One cut-scene later, it's time to start running around the inside of the building. Trying to summon the lift only makes an agent smash through it, but hell – it's still a way through. Get to the next lift ASAP, to activate another cut-scene and end the sub-chapter.

CODE-U-LIKE

Need to cheat your way to victory on a certain game? Write to us and we'll ease your pain.

THE HULK (SLES 51508)

Enter these codes at an in-game terminal:
Play as Gray Hulk: JANITOR

Unlock Desert Battle Art: FIFTEEN

Unlock Hulk Movie FMV Art: NANOMED

Unlock Hulk Transformed Art: SANFRAN

Unlock Hulk vs. Hulk Dogs Art: PITBULL

Enter these codes in the Options menu:

Double Health for Enemies: BRNGITN

Double Health for Hulk: HLTHDSE

Half Enemies' HP: MMMYHLP

High Score Reset: NMBTHIH

Regenerator: FLSHWND

DEF JAM VENDETTA (SLES 51479)

Cheat codes for unlocking characters. Go into the Character Select screen in Battle Mode. Any match is fine. Use L1, R1, L2, R2.

Arii: X, O, A, O, O

Briggs (alternate costume): X, A, O, O, O

Briggs (alternate costume): X, A, O, X, O

Carla: X, O, X, X, X

Chukklez: O, O, A, X, O

Cruz: O, A, X, X, O

D-Mob: O, A, O, X, O

D-Mob (alternate costume): O, O, A, O, O

Dan G: X, O, X, O, O

Deebo: O, O, O, X, A

Deja: O, O, O, O, X

DMX: O, X, O, A, O

Drake: A, O, O, X, X

Drake (alternate costume): X, A, A, O, O

Funkmaster Flex: O, A, O, O, O

Headache: A, A, A, O, O

House: A, X, A, O, X

Iceberg: O, A, O, O, O

Ludacris: O, O, O, O, A

Manny (alternate costume): O, O, O, O, O

Masa: X, O, A, O, O

Method Man: O, O, X, A, O

Moses: A, A, O, O, X

N.O.R.E: O, O, A, X, O

Nyne: O, O, X, X, A

Omar: O, O, O, A, A

Opal: O, O, O, O, A

Peewee: X, X, O, A, O

Peewee (alternate costume): X, A, A, O, O

Penny: X, X, X, A, O

Pockets: A, O, O, O, X

Proof (alternate costume): X, O, A, O, O

Razor: A, O, A, O, X

Razor (alternate costume): O, O, X, A, A

Redman: O, O, A, O, X

Ruffneck: X, O, X, A, O

Ruffneck (alternate costume): O, O, A, X, O

Scarface: O, O, X, A, O

Sketch: A, A, O, O, X

Snowman: A, A, X, X, O

Spider (alternate costume): O, A, X, O, O

Steel: X, A, O, O, A

T'ai: O, O, O, X, O

Zaheer: A, A, O, X, X

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE (SLES 82009)

Photograph Mode

Successfully complete bomb disposal mode, hold up mode (alternative missions), and eliminate mode to unlock photograph mode in the Alternative Missions.

Raiden X

Successfully complete 100% of the missions as Raiden and Ninja Raiden.

Sunglasses

After completing the game two times, Snake and Raiden will be wearing sunglasses.

Unlock Boss Survival

Beat the full game (Tanker and Plant) to unlock boss survival mode.

Unlock Cast Theater

Beat the full game (Tanker and Plant) to

unlock the casting theater.

Unlock Everything

If you have a save from the Document of Metal Gear Solid 2 PS2 DVD's 5 VR missions you will unlock everything in the game with it on your memory card before starting Substance up.

Unlock MGS1 Snake

Complete 100% missions with Raiden, Raiden(Ninja), X Raiden, Snake, Plisken, and Snake (tuxedo) to use Snake from Metal Gear Solid 1.

Unlock MGS1 Snake in VR Missions

Complete 100% of Snake's, Plisken's, and Tuxedo Snake's VR Missions.

Unlock Ninja Raiden in VR Missions

Beat 50% of Raiden's VR Missions to unlock Ninja Raiden in the VR Missions.

Unlock Plisken in VR Missions

Beat 50% of Solid Snakes VR Missions to unlock Plisken in the VR Missions.

Unlock Tuxedo Snake

Get 100% with Snake and Plisken to unlock Tuxedo Snake.

SPEED KINGS (SLES 50848)

Quick start: Hold Gas + O, then release O after the countdown.

Wheelie: Hold the left analogue stick back.

Standing Wheelie: Press O + left analogue stick back.

Surfing Wheelie: Press O + O + left analogue stick back.

Cross Surfing Wheelie: Press O + left analogue stick back + R1 + O.

Endo: Press left analogue stick forward + O.

Surfing Powerdown: Press O + left analogue stick forward + A.

Handstand Powerdown: Press O + O + left analogue stick forward + A.

Surfing: Press O + left analogue stick forward, then left analogue stick back.

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DEATH BY DISK

RYGAR: THE LEGENDARY ADVENTURE

Get your head around this Greek myth-lite adventure before it feeds you to the lions

THE DISKARMOUR

Rygar's giant yo-yo style weapons – Diskarmours – are what you'll use to shred enemies, break down walls and cause plenty of mayhem as you complete your adventure. They're also needed to smash pots, pillars, columns and other structures to expose valuable items.

There are six different Diskarmour designs to choose from, but they are only accessible once you've completed the required criteria. Here's how to bag yourself each of the six Diskarmours.

Pizzarmour: Complete the game under the Normal difficulty setting with a grade D ranking or higher, then press O when the Tecmo logo appears at the start of the game.

Guitermour: Complete the Necromandio Cave under the Legendary difficulty setting then press O and O when the Tecmo logo appears at the start of the game.



Hambarmour: Complete the game under the Hard difficulty setting with a grade A ranking or higher then press O when the Tecmo logo appears at the start of the game to use this tasty bit of kit.

Rolfarmour: Complete the Necromandio Cave under the Hard difficulty setting then press O when the Tecmo logo appears at the start.

Susharmour: Complete the game under the Legendary difficulty setting with a grade S ranking then press O and O when the Tecmo logo appears.

Euroarmour: Complete the Necromandio Cave under the Normal difficulty setting then press O when the logo appears.

BUILD UP POINTS

Build Up Points are small orbs which are exposed when certain enemies or structures have been destroyed. They can then be used to strengthen and increase a Diskarmour's level once you have accumulated 2,000 points or more. The blue coloured orbs contain ten Build Up Points, while the purple orbs contain 100 Build Up Points.

MOVE CHART

The Move Chart can be found on the Inventory screen during a game. It'll display all the moves and combos that can be performed with a Diskarmour. Use the Move Chart to try out new attacks on different enemies as you progress through the game to increase your combat skills and prepare you for the boss battles.

THE NECROMANDIO CAVE SIDE QUEST

The Necromandio Cave is a side quest within Rygar. It consists of 30 levels in which you must pit your wits against hordes of enemies that vary for each level. The entrance to the Necromandio Cave is located below a stone block at Othrys Mountain, just before you enter Magma Cave for a second time (it can only be accessed once you have the ability to tackle stone blocks). Unfortunately there are no save points within the Necromandio Cave, which makes it extremely tricky when playing on the Hard and Legendary difficulty settings. Save your game before entering the Necromandio Cave, keep an Ambrosia, Omphalos and Caduceus in your item list if possible, and increase your Diskarmour's levels to maximum. Do these things and you'll stand a much better chance against the hordes of enemies awaiting you.

PROMOTION

PlayStation®2

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03303	Grand Theft Auto 3	Tank
03308	Grand Theft Auto 3	Lower Wanted Level
03307	Grand Theft Auto 3	Full Armour
03304	Grand Theft Auto 3	Dodo Mode
03305	Grand Theft Auto 3	Break off Limbs
03301	Grand Theft Auto 3	Weapons
03302	Grand Theft Auto 3	Money
03306	Grand Theft Auto 3	Full Health
11351	Primal	Invincibility
11352	Primal	Easy Kill
14261	The Getaway	Double Health
14262	The Getaway	Armoured Car Weapon
14745	Blood Rayne	Enemy Freeze
14741	Blood Rayne	God Mode
14747	Blood Rayne	Gratuitous Dismemberment
14744	Blood Rayne	Level Select
14743	Blood Rayne	Time Factor
14748	Blood Rayne	Juggy
14742	Blood Rayne	Fill Bloodlust
14746	Blood Rayne	Show Weapons
10543	Midnight Club II	Unlock All
10541	Midnight Club II	All Locations
10542	Midnight Club II	All Cars
12202	Ty The Tasmanian Tiger	Unlock all Technorangs
12201	Ty The Tasmanian Tiger	Show All Items
12572	The Sims	All Objects Free
12573	The Sims	Unlock Party Motel
12571	The Sims	All Locked Objects
12863	X-Men 2: Wolverine's Revenge	Cheat Menu
12862	X-Men 2: Wolverine's Revenge	All Costumes
12861	X-Men 2: Wolverine's Revenge	Level Select
12864	X-Men 2: Wolverine's Revenge	Cerebro Files
11332	Red Faction 2	Unlimited Ammo
11331	Red Faction 2	Super Health
11333	Red Faction 2	Gibby Explosions
11334	Red Faction 2	Unlock All Cheats
13653	BMX XXX	Unlock All Bikes
13652	BMX XXX	Unlock All Levels
13651	BMX XXX	Unlock All Movies
13655	BMX XXX	Fluffy Bunny Mode
13654	BMX XXX	Amishboy
13541	Jurassic Park Operation Genesis	Money
13542	Jurassic Park Operation Genesis	All Research
13544	Jurassic Park Operation Genesis	Market Day
13543	Jurassic Park Operation Genesis	Mr DNA
12522	Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	Full Arrows/Axes
12521	Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	Refill Your Health
04124	Turok Evolution	Ammo
04121	Turok Evolution	Invincibility
04125	Turok Evolution	Invisibility
04123	Turok Evolution	Level Skip
04122	Turok Evolution	Weapons
08702	Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2	Elvis Outfit
08701	Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2	All Levels
09021	Conflict Desert Storm	Cheat Menu
05921	No One Lives Forever	Level Select
11302	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Unlock Skaters
11303	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Perfect Rails
11304	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Perfect Manuals
11305	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Unlock Everything
11301	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Matrix Cheat
09923	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	All Weapons
09925	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	Nailgun Mode
09924	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	Level Select
09921	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	Level Skip
09922	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	God Mode
06846	Medal of Honour: Frontline	Bullet Shield Mode
06847	Medal of Honour: Frontline	Perfectionist
06845	Medal of Honour: Frontline	Photon Torpedoes
06848	Medal of Honour: Frontline	Snipe-A-Rama
06844	Medal of Honour: Frontline	Gold Medal for Current Mission
06843	Medal of Honour: Frontline	1 Shot Kills
06842	Medal of Honour: Frontline	Unlimited Ammo
06841	Medal of Honour: Frontline	Invincibility
03252	Max Payne	Health
03251	Max Payne	Level Select
07391	Soldier of Fortune Gold Edition	Invincibility
07392	Soldier of Fortune Gold Edition	Full Ammo
07394	Soldier of Fortune Gold Edition	Hand to Hand and Explosive Weapons
07393	Soldier of Fortune Gold Edition	Heavy Weapons
02881	StuntMan	All Cars
02882	StuntMan	All Toys
02883	StuntMan	All Filmography
12582	007 Nightfire	Upgrade Q Gadgets
12580	007 Nightfire	Bigger Sniper Rifle Clip
12581	007 Nightfire	Level Select
01961	Soul Reaver 2	Bonus Materials
08121	Spider-Man	Master Code
08122	Spider-Man	Unlimited Webbing
08124	Spider-Man	Level Select
08125	Spider-Man	Matrix Style attacks
08123	Spider-Man	All Fighting Controls
04354	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	All Movies
04353	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	All People
04352	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	All Levels
04351	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	All Cheats
06722	Baldurs Gate Dark Alliance	Super Character
06721	Baldurs Gate Dark Alliance	Invincibility and Level warp
12001	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Tricks
12002	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Surfers

shortlist

Your definitive guide to the ever expanding library of PlayStation 2 games.



So you've just bought a PlayStation 2, and you're confronted by a dauntingly huge line-up of games to choose from at your local gaming store. Now what? The Shortlist is OPS2's one-stop guide to getting an idea of what's hot and what's not. As time goes on and new games come out, we drop some of the older games that don't warrant being remembered, replacing them with newer games that score well in the reviews section.

If you just want to find the best of the best, look for the games that receive a Bronze, Silver or Gold award.

GLOSSARY

Just got your PS2? It's your first console ever and you've bought the best magazine to give the latest and most up-to-date information but don't have a clue what we're going on about? Well, without wanting to patronise those gamers who've been around since the Atari 2600 by spelling out the meaning of gaming terms and acronyms in the reviews and previews, here's your 'at a glance' guide to all things PS2 and technical.

Afterburn: An extra kick of power in flight sims.

AI: Artificial Intelligence.

Analogue: Re: Dual Shock 2. Registering degrees of input, as opposed to digital's on/off status.

Boards: Snowboarders or games featuring the alpine sport.

Coin-op: Coin-operated arcade videogames.

Cut-scene: Explanatory, non-playable scene in videogame (also 'FMV').

CPU: Central Processor Unit.

Brains of PS2.

Dev kits: Programmable PS2s used by developers.

D-pad: Direction pad on PS2 controller.

Dual Shock controller: Controller for PSone.

Dual Shock 2: Controller designed for PS2 (with analogue).

ECTS: European Computer Trade Show.

E3: Electronic Entertainment Expo (US).

Frame rate: Number of images drawn per second in games. Higher frame rate = smoother animation.

FPS: First-Person Shooter (eg Quake III).

Hack 'n' slash: Refers to game (usually fantasy) featuring blade combat.

High res: High resolution (graphics).

HUD: Head Up Display. Screen furniture such as map, speedometer, etc.

Iconography: Graphical shorthand defining game, genre etc.

Low res: Refers to poor quality graphics.

L3: Pressing down on the PS2 controller's left joystick.

Mini-games: Bonus, playable games found in larger titles.

Polygon: Building block of videogame graphics.

PSone: The precursor to PS2. If you don't know what this is then frankly there's no hope for you.

Real-time: When one second of game time equals one second in the real world.

RPG: Role-playing game.

RTS: Real-time strategy.

R3: Pressing down on the PS2 controller's right joystick.

Sim: Simulation.

Strafe: Move sideways while looking straight.

USB: Port to connect peripherals such as keyboard to PS2.

US: United States.

Wii: Nintendo's console.

Xbox: Microsoft's console.

Y: PlayStation 2 button.

Z: PlayStation 2 button.

AA: Action/Adventure.

AB: Action/Adventure.

AC: Action/Adventure.

AD: Action/Adventure.

YOUR KEY TO SHORTLIST

GOLD
Only for games that scored the elusive 10/10.

SILVER
Awarded to games with a mighty 9/10.

BRONZE
Given to games that scored an impressive 8/10.

TOP 5 GAMES FOR NUDITY



1. BMX XXX

Unshapely, inhuman, angular robot breasts. But they are on show

2. THE GETAWAY

Strangely unerotic pole dancers grace a Soho strip joint. Topless

3. GTA: VICE CITY

Candy Suxx, performs an 'act' just off camera but you hear enough

4. MGS2

Raiden wakes up in a foetal position sans clothes. Good prank

5. LARGO WINCH

It's French so there's bound to be copious amounts of nudity and lovemaking

BATMAN VENGEANCE OVERALL 06
Interesting action adventure, but just a little too 'on rails' to provide a real challenge.

BLADE II OVERALL 04
Cruddy controls stop this otherwise peachy beat 'em up from realising its full potential.

BLOODRAYNE ★ OVERALL 08
BloodRayne is an explosion of sex, action and violence. It's not going to tax your mind but it's so much fun you won't care.

BURNOUT ★ OVERALL 08
OutRun grows up, and learns how to crash properly. Thrilling, edgy race action that will threaten your no claim bonus.

BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT ★ OVERALL 08
An even more intense racing experience than its predecessor The Fast & the Furious in a video game.

CAPCOM VS. SNK 2 ★ OVERALL 08
A superb 2D beat-'em-up from the house that knows all there is to know about combat. With endless two player fun.

CART FURY: CHAMPIONSHIP RACING OVERALL 06
Arcade racer with crazy physics and a dose of high-speed hard shouldering.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3 ★ OVERALL 09
Sets new standards in rally racing visuals, with impressive car damage and weather effects. A must have for offroad racing fans.

COMMANDOS 2 ★ OVERALL 08
A daunting but extremely worthy and rewarding strategy game where the player controls a team of operatives in WWII missions.

CONFLICT ZONE OVERALL 06
A pretty run-of-the-mill RTS game that cleverly forces you to take account of media coverage.

CONTRA: SHATTERED SOLDIER OVERALL 07
A fantastic trip down memory lane for old school veterans, but Contra may confuse or confound the contemporary gamer.

CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTX OVERALL 06
Crash splins onto PS2 but little has changed from PSone. Time for some new ideas with titles like Ratchet & Clank setting the new standards.

CRAZY TAXI ★ OVERALL 08
Arcade thrills aplenty in this no-holds-barred city-smashing racer.

CRICKET 2002 ★ OVERALL 08
The best leather-on-willow sim on any console, ever. Relax and make like it's always summer.

DANCING STAGE MEGAMIX OVERALL 07
Top sweaty disco fun, marred by a flimsy selection of songs. All together now - big fish, little fish, cardboard box.

DARK CLOUD OVERALL 07
An enthralling RPG with atmospheric music and a world-building element thrown in for good measure.

DEAD OR ALIVE 2 OVERALL 07
Blistering beat-'em-up that's famous for its stealthy gameplay and collection of extremely well-endowed lady fighters.

DEF JAM VENDETTA ★ OVERALL 08
Some more options would have made this a true champion, but it's still a worthy contender. SmackDown watch out!

DEUS EX ★ OVERALL 09
The thinking man's action shooter and genre-busting game that redefines expectations. Superb.



DEVIL MAY CRY

Melding battling with lush surroundings and a superb gothic atmosphere. One of the best PS2 games yet? Definitely.

DEVIL MAY CRY 2

Die-hards may cry at the new direction, but there's still enough gorgeous style and firearms in *DMC2* to satisfy action junkies.

DNA

Gene warfare and confusing puzzles abound in this bizarre manga adventure.

DONALD DUCK: QUACK ATTACK

A first-generation platformer that suffers from Stone Age gameplay and graphics.

DRAGON'S LAIR

Unplayable retro adventure. Should have stayed firmly stuck on the Laser Disc where it belonged.

DROPSHIP: UNITED PEACE FORCE

Impressive combat sim that rewards commitment with paced and varied gameplay.

DYNASTY WARRIORS 3

More of the same great mass battles and explosive action, marred only slightly by samey gameplay.

DYNASTY WARRIORS 3: XTREME LEGENDS

A solid, entertaining expansion pack that will have *Dynasty Warriors 3* fans whooping with joy.

DYNASTY WARRIORS 4

Dynasty Warriors 4 is an accomplished title, but due to its lack of innovation, it's unlikely to get many pulses racing.

ENDGAME

Sets a new standard in the lightgun shooter genre: innovative, refreshing and most of all, a tonne of fun.

ENTER THE MATRIX

Despite a painful lack of depth *ETM* is an enjoyable package for anyone after another dose of *Matrix* mayhem.

ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND

Adventure that includes smart visuals, witty script and intelligent puzzles.

ESPN NATIONAL HOCKEY NIGHT

Other hockey sims on the market with better gameplay put this in the sin bin.

ESPN NBA 2NIGHT

Hardcore gameplay makes this one for basketball heads only.

ESPN X GAMES SKATEBOARDING

Not-so-extreme skateboarding sim with some unsightly graphical glitches. You're better off sticking with *Tony Hawk's*.

ESPN WINTER X-GAMES SNOWBOARDING

Lifelike snowboarder, ruined by unsightly bland graphics, unresponsive controls and a lack of excitement.

EOE: EVE OF EXTINCTION

A dull, button mashing affair.

EVIL TWIN

Adventure from the dark side of platforming. Average, so-so animation with 76 levels of twisted plot.

EXTERMINATION

Alien-inspired survival horror-fest that is set in a deserted Antarctic research base. Positively crawling with cool design innovations.

EXTREME-G 3

A neon beast of a future bike racer that requires skill and brains. Takes some 'inspiration' from the *Wipeout* series.

EYE TOY: PLAY

Forget the fact that it's marketed as casual gamers; give it a try, because when it comes to *Eye Toy*, seeing is believing.

F1 2001

Another solid PS2 *Formula One* title, but ultimately it's a tad soulless.

F1 CAREER CHALLENGE

At last, an *F1* game that makes a priority of excitement and thrills over worthy but dull simulation.

FANTAVISION

The world's first fireworks game. Not enormous, but of rare and random beauty.

FERRARI F355 CHALLENGE

One of the most realistic racing simulations ever. More for driving game experts than casual racers.

FIFA 2003

Despite closing the gap with a more realistic football simulation, this is still a goal behind *Pro Evolution Soccer 2*.

FINAL FANTASY X

Nothing else needs to be said about this brilliant RPG. A classic Square adventure with next-gen presentation and production.

FORMULA ONE 2003

Another *F1* corker! All the drivers, tracks and cars included. Load it up and feel the speed. Feel the need for speed.

FREESTYLE

This is potentially a great game, but it's scuppered by careless lack of fairness and failure to reward skill with progression.

FUR FIGHTERS

Cute fluffy creatures armed to the teeth with shotguns blast each other to pieces. The toy cupboard will never look innocent again.

G1 JOCKEY

More like an exercise in statistical analysis than a horse racing game, with bland graphics and sound.

GIO GIO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE

Brilliant cel-shaded graphics bring a cast of weirdo anime characters to life in a fighting game based on a comic series.

GHOST RECON

A squad-based first person shooter that suffers from a cumbersome interface for ordering troops about, often degenerating into arcade-style run-and-gun gaming.

GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO

The Reaper might be cool, but loading times hamper this port of a complex PC battle game.

GITAROO MAN

If you have a PS2 collection, you should definitely have at least one game like this one in there! Check it out.

GLOBAL TOURING CHALLENGE: AFRICA

An impressive racer that is further lifted by clever use of interesting locations.

GRAND THEFT AUTO 3

Not quite as good as its neon-soaked, '80s prequel but it's still fantastic fun and can now be found for bargain prices.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

Better than *GTA 3*! Cars, crooks, coke, and chaos with total freedom to do what you want. A must have for any gamer, serious or not.

GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC

If you didn't know already, *GT3* is the greatest racing game in the world. Speed down to the store and buy it now.

GRAN TURISMO CONCEPT: 2002 TOKYO-GENEVA

A more accessible version of *GT3*, with concept cars. Perfect for those who just want to race, rather than play mechanic.

GRAVITY GAMES

An unoriginal rip off of the *Mat Hoffman* series, offering little reason to break away from the aforementioned pearls.

GUMBALL 3000

A decidedly crap racing title that fails to deliver on all fronts. Not something to bother with considering how many other decent racers are about.

G-SURFERS

Futuristic racer that's improved by an innovative track editor.

GUILTY GEAR X

Pushes hard at beat-'em-up boundaries. The start of a new wave of next-gen 2D fighters.

GUNGRAVE

Bizarre Manga inspired shooting game with gorgeous visuals, but a distinct lack of depth to back up all that eye candy.

GUN GRIFFON BLAZE

A mech shooter for robot obsessive-types everywhere.

OVERALL 05

OVERALL 07

OVERALL 08

BRONZE PlayStation 2

OVERALL 08

SILVER PlayStation 2

OVERALL 08

BRONZE PlayStation 2

OVERALL 07

BRONZE PlayStation 2

OVERALL 08

BRONZE PlayStation 2

OVERALL 05

OVERALL 06

BRONZE PlayStation 2

OVERALL 07

BRONZE PlayStation 2

OVERALL 06

BRONZE PlayStation 2

OVERALL 08

BRONZE PlayStation 2

OVERALL 07

BRONZE PlayStation 2

OVERALL 10

GOLD PlayStation 2

OVERALL 10

GOLD PlayStation 2

OVERALL 09

SILVER PlayStation 2

OVERALL 08

BRONZE PlayStation 2

OVERALL 04

BRONZE PlayStation 2

OVERALL 03

BRONZE PlayStation 2

OVERALL 07

BRONZE PlayStation 2

OVERALL 08

BRONZE PlayStation 2

OVERALL 06

BRONZE PlayStation 2

OVERALL 07

THE OPS2 TRIPLE BILL



Make an evening of it with our knockout 1, 2, 3 of game, DVD and CD united by a single passion. This month: shoot-'em-ups!

PlayStation 2



GAME

TIMESPLITTERS 2
A feast of handheld widomakers welded to a block of pure gameplay. Utterly brilliant



DVD

HARD BOILED
Arguably John 'balletic gunplay' Woo's finest hour. Genuinely awesome slug-flogging action



CD

GO PLASTIC/ SQUAREPUSHER
The audio equivalent of 'going postal' at an arms dealer convention. On speed

HALF-LIFE

The award-winning PC first-person shooter/adventure arrives on PS2 in resplendent form. An essential purchase.

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

Simplistic puzzles and gorgeous graphics make this a winner for younger fans of the books and films.

HEADHUNTER

Dirty Harry meets *MG2* in a world where the law is controlled by bounty hunters. There's a great game hidden here somewhere.

HAVEN: CALL OF THE KING

An epic platform game that provides a seamless adventure with no loading interrupting the action.

HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC

Patchy PC-style fantasy adventure.

HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN

A disturbingly realistic take on living the life of a hired killer. Not one for the squeamish or pure of heart, but it contains brilliant gaming.

INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER

Genuine squads and more instant gratification take *ISS* up to the PS2 level.

ISS 2

More arcadey than *PES* with better commentary, but dodgy ball physics and animation. Not for soccer purists.

JAK AND DAXTER: THE PRECURSOR LEGACY

A brilliant platformer from the makers of *Crash Bandicoot* that introduces two heroes you'll be seeing a lot more of.

JAMES BOND 007: AGENT UNDER FIRE

A thrilling single-player *Bond* experience, with a great four-player mode and beautiful *Bond* girls.

JEREMY MCGRATH SUPERCROSS WORLD

A motocross game that's just like the real thing (minus the thrills, speed, gritty handling and mud).

JURASSIC PARK: PROJECT GENESIS

A prehistoric premise, sure. But *Operation Genesis* puts a fresh spin on the *God* sim genre. Hammond would be proud.

KENGO: MASTER OF BUSHIDO

A padded-out Training mode makes up for this smart ninja fighter's otherwise rather limited nature.

KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER

A bit too similar to *Tony Hawk* for our liking, but still the best surfing game around.

KESSEN

A real-time strategy game set in feudal Japan, where you get to command a huge army. Strategy fans only.

KINGDOM HEARTS

A beautifully produced RPG with Disney and Square characters. Don't let the kiddy vibe fool you, this one's very tough.

KLONOA 2: LUNATEA'S VEIL

Cute and cheerful platformer featuring the lovable clove-eared blue cat-rabbit hybrid. Fun stuff.

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001

A more-than-competent boxing sim. Not a match for *Rocky* though.

KURI KURI MIX

A blend of two-player co-operation and cutesy platformer. An odd but worthwhile addition to any PS2 collection.

LARGO WINCH

Based on a French comic character, this spy game is too linear, and lacks the interactivity that is needed to maintain a gamer's attention.

LEAGIA 2: DUAL SAGA

A Japanese RPG that uses a combat system full of combos and special moves. A host of mini-games prevent this from falling into the 'generic' basket.

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING

'Violent ballet' with a shortage of modes and options. There are much better recreations of Pro wrestling.

LE MANS 24 HOURS

Accessible for gamers daunted by sim-style vehicle handling, but has depth and thrills.



LMA MANAGER 2002 ★ OVERALL 08
A-grade soccer management game, but for die-hard football fans only.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS ★ OVERALL 08
Superb hack and slash gaming based on the movie, not the book. Not very deep, but delivers huge battles.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

MARK OF KRI ★ OVERALL 08
An enjoyable single player adventure that hacks, stabs and slashes at the beat 'em stereotype. Check it out.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

MADDEN NFL 2003 ★ OVERALL 08
While realistic enough, of the two major NFL games around, this is the flashier. Best for those who want high scores over realism.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2 ★ OVERALL 08
Whilst impressive in many areas and exceptional in some, MHPB2 doesn't quite live up to expectations.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

MAX PAYNE ★ OVERALL 08
A fine shooting game that is underrated. Fantastic innovations and a very cinematic feel lifts the action.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

MAXIMO ★ OVERALL 08
A tribute to Ghosts 'n' Goblins and an excellent mix of retro and modern gaming.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

MDK2: ARMAGEDDON ★ OVERALL 09
Originally on Dreamcast and PSone, this third-person shooter has lost nothing in translation. Destined to be a cult classic.

SILVER
PlayStation 2

MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE ★ OVERALL 09
A very realistic FPS that has been wowing audiences the world over since the game was released.

SILVER
PlayStation 2

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY ★ OVERALL 10
A must-own, state-of-the-art tactical espionage game that's reason enough to buy a PS2. A superbly paced, gripping story.

GOLD
PlayStation 2

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE ★ OVERALL 08
Incredibly comprehensive Metal Gear package for newbies but MGS2 owners will struggle to find \$110's worth.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

MICROMACHINES ★ OVERALL 08
Nothing particularly 'next-gen' about this instalment of the series, but an excellent racing diversion nonetheless.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

MODERNGROOVE: MINISTRY OF SOUND OVERALL 06
An entertaining lightshow generator, containing five full dance albums. Not quite up to the standards set by MTV Music Generator.

MONSTERS, INC. OVERALL 04
Disney Platform game, based on the film. Initially amusing but sloppy and basic with a lifespan of no more than a few hours, though the film clips are entertaining.

MOTO GP OVERALL 07
Gran Turismo on two wheels? A fantastic motorbike sim that rewards repeated play.

MOTO GP2 OVERALL 07
A refreshing bike racer. Slightly repetitive gameplay and a shallow multiplayer, but slick, fast and realistic. Excellent 3D graphics and race replay facility.

MOTO GP3 OVERALL 07
A little repetitive and far too similar to the last two games. Still, it's the best motorbike game on the system thus far.

MTV MUSIC GENERATOR ★ OVERALL 09
Home DJ sample/mixer music maker. It's enormous fun and high-on faultlines. This is exciting and well put together.

SILVER
PlayStation 2

MX SUPERFLY 2003: FEAT RICKY CARMICHAEL OVERALL 07
Polished and engaging motorcross sim that utilises its subject matter to great effect. An excellent extreme game.

MX RIDER OVERALL 06
Motocross/supercross sim that lacks the true grittiness and excitement of the sport.

NBA 2K3 ★ OVERALL 08
Not only realistic, but packed with plenty of features as well, offering a wide selection of game modes.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

NBA HOOPZ OVERALL 06
Instant arcade-styled basketball sim, but there are better ones on the street.

NBA LIVE 2002 OVERALL 06
An update of NBA Live 2001? Only for true basketball nuts.

NBA STREET VOLUME 2 ★ OVERALL 09
A must-own for hoop fans and anyone looking for a solid multiplayer title.

SILVER
PlayStation 2

NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2 ★ OVERALL 08
One of the better arcade racers to grace the PS2. Truly the best of the NFS series, not just a PS2 update.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

NFL 2K3 ★ OVERALL 09
This is the game to own for anyone into American football thanks to its ultra-realistic graphics and gameplay.

SILVER
PlayStation 2

NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB ★ OVERALL 08
American football game that has unique features, but unable to compete with Madden 2003.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

NHL 2K3 ★ OVERALL 08
Excellent simulation settings for the die-hard fans, and plenty of arcade thrills for the rest of us.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

NHL 2003 OVERALL 07
The definitive Ice hockey videogame, but only a slight improvement on NHL 2002.

NY RACE OVERALL 05
Average future taxi racer, based on the opening sequence of Luc Besson's sci-fi epic The Fifth Element. Nothing crazy to see here.

ONI OVERALL 07
New character animation in an enjoyable 3rd person sci-fi romp.

ONIMUSHA: WARLORDS ★ OVERALL 08
Impressive survival horror that lets the PlayStation 2 run riot. Does suffer from an iffy PAL conversion, though.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

OPERATION WINBACK OVERALL 06
Lacks variety, but still an enjoyable stealth shooter, nevertheless.

ORPHEN OVERALL 04
A disappointing anime-inspired Japanese RPG.

PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2 OVERALL 07
Rhythm action game from Japan in which you play a rapping dog. Simple but compelling gameplay. Short life span and only really worth revisiting for nostalgia.

PARIS-DAKAR RALLY OVERALL 05
Based on the race of the same name, this sim does little to inspire interest.

PENNY RACERS OVERALL 04
A half-baked and underfed GT3, with just a few good tracks, it's a difficult one to recommend to anybody wanting a great racer.

POLICE 24/7 OVERALL 05
Basic cop-shot light gun game with motion capture option. Frantic and fast but lacks structure and individuality. Just another on-rails shoot-'em-up.

POOLMASTER OVERALL 05
Dull pool sim, despite some tidy ball physics.

PRIDE FC ★ OVERALL 08
The new king of the ring! Pride FC is the most realistic fighting simulation available on any system to date. Great stuff!

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

PRISONER OF WAR OVERALL 07
Escaping from POW camps is all well and good, but you remain a prisoner of often rigid game objectives. Even so, this is a bold, compelling adventure game.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2 ★ OVERALL 09
For the second year running, the Pro Evolution series has been the best soccer-sim on any system. Lacks licences, but has total realism.

SILVER
PlayStation 2

PROJECT EDEN ★ OVERALL 08
Look beyond some not-great visuals and you'll lose weeks to this complex and satisfying first-person shooter/adventure.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

QUAKE III ★ OVERALL 09
In four-player, this FPS is solid multiplayer fun. A technical tour de force, it runs smoothly and looks absolutely gorgeous.

SILVER
PlayStation 2

RATCHET & CLANK ★ OVERALL 09
Pure platforming bliss from the company behind the original Spyro the Dragon titles on the PSone.

SILVER
PlayStation 2

RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC OVERALL 07
Rayman offers plenty of 'armless fun but he's no match for Ratchets or Raccoons.

CELEB-O-PIMP!

How much do celebs want to pose with OPS2?



THIS MONTH... RORY BREMNER

We bothered the chameleonic face-scruncher in our local boozetique. After some rudimentary whining about celebs usually helping us out, he folded, grabbed the mag and pretended to read for the sake of a piccy. The cost to us? No dollars and no cents – bargain! Remember readers, if you supply a photo of celeb + OPS2 it means a free game for you. What you waiting for? Brandish those celebs (any old D-list bloke will do). Get snapping. Send 'em in (usual address) and we'll print 'em, deffo. Yay celebs!

RALLY FUSION: RACE OF CHAMPIONS OVERALL 06
A decent offroad racing simulation that only really falls short in that it fails to match the wonders of Colin McRae Rally 3 and WRC II Extreme.

READY 2 RUMBLE: ROUND 2 OVERALL 07
A marvellous, arcade-based comedy boxing game, pitting ridiculous cartoon fighters against each other.

RED FACTION ★ OVERALL 08
Ace first-person shooter that melds MGS-style tactics and the all-out blasting of the hallowed Quake III.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X ★ OVERALL 05
A captivating story, cinematic atmosphere, kinetic action, frights, thrills and copious amounts of blood-letting.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN ★ OVERALL 08
Only the high standards of the FPS competition prevent this from being a truly essential buy.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

REZ ★ OVERALL 09
Exploring the relationship between sound and colour this techno shooter provides pure gameplay. Unique, and refreshing.

SILVER
PlayStation 2

RIDGE RACER V OVERALL 07
A popular racer, but high hopes were scuppered by the limited size and a lack of originality.

RING OF RED ★ OVERALL 08
A mech RTS that's fun? Oh yes. A must-buy for the discerning robo-fetishist after something different.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

ROBOTCH: BATTLECRY OVERALL 07
A cel-shaded shooter that brings the classic anime to life, but is held back by a decidedly clunky control system.

ROCKY ★ OVERALL 08
The best boxing title available for PS2. Has a great story mode that takes the player through the movies. Adrienne!

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

RUGBY 2002 ★ OVERALL 08
So far the only PS2 game to represent this sport. More akin to Madden than FIFA in approach. EA Sports have done it again.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

RUMBLE RACING ★ OVERALL 08
Fast and furious arcade stunt racer that has tonnes of challenge and replay value, especially in two-player mode.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

RUN LIKE HELL OVERALL 07
A refreshing sci-fi survival horror title with a host of famous names handling the voice acting.

RYGAR: THE LEGENDARY ADVENTURE OVERALL 07
This would make a fine and worthy addition to any action fan's game collection. Brevity is the only pain.

SALT LAKE 2002 OVERALL 03
Souless Winter Olympics game. Decent weather effects but the majority of events are rather tedious.

SHADOW OF MEMORIES ★ OVERALL 08
Filmic adventure that keeps the surprises coming with a serpentine plot.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

SHINOBI ★ OVERALL 08
Shinobi is the kind of frantic, shallow, old school arcade game we don't see enough of anymore. A fast and bloody good time.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

SILENT HILL 2 ★ OVERALL 09
One of the most atmospheric and genuinely frightening titles on PS2. Like all of your worst nightmares rolled in to one game.

SILVER
PlayStation 2

SILENT HILL 3 ★ OVERALL 09
The nastiest game on PlayStation 2 – we dare you to play it!

SILVER
PlayStation 2

SILENT SCOPE 2 OVERALL 07
A worthwhile update of this arcade sniper sim, though the formula is looking tired now.

SILPHEED: THE LOST PLANET OVERALL 03
Tedious top-down shooter. No-one bought a PS2 for games like this.

SIR ALEX FERGUSON'S PLAYER MANAGER 2002 OVERALL 06
Adept footy management sim, but lacks the killer goal.

SKY ODYSSEY ★ OVERALL 08
A flight sim where you don't have to shoot anything, just complete crazy missions.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2



SLED STORM OVERALL 06
A maxed-out, splashy remake of the PSone racing classic, very much in the SSX mould.

SMASH COURT TENNIS PRO TOURNAMENT OVERALL 07
Deep & stylish this game suffers from disproportionate leaps in difficulty that can be off-putting.

SMUGGLER'S RUN 2: HOSTILE TERRITORIES OVERALL 07
Impressively big, fast and frantic, but not much different to its predecessor.

SOCOM: US NAVY SEALS ★ OVERALL 08
Engrossing tactical action, with excellent online play, but if you haven't got broadband you won't fully appreciate it.

SOUL REAVER 2 OVERALL 07
Soul-sucking fantasy adventure that revolves around the exploits of Raziel and his huge Reaver sword.

SPACE RACE OVERALL 05
The cartoon Kart racer in its simplest form. Lacks originality and is a poor Mario Kart rip-off, but uses cel-shading to nice effect.

SPIDER-MAN OVERALL 07
It doesn't display huge innovations over its PSone counterpart, although it's a solid and enjoyable Spidey title either way.

SPLASHDOWN OVERALL 07
Above average Sea-Doo racer, with impressive water effects. The racing is sluggish though.

SPY HUNTER ★ OVERALL 08
Pretend to be James Bond. Captures the spirit of the original game and adds further shiny next-gen knobs.

SSX TRICKY ★ OVERALL 09
Inventive rainbow coloured high speed snowboard game packed with crazy courses, and crazier characters.

STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER OVERALL 07
Gorgeous to look at, taking the gamer into the Star Wars universe, but is let down by repetitive gameplay.

STAR WARS: CLONE WARS OVERALL 07
One for the Star Wars collectors, and a great battlefield in its own right. Shallow but still worth investigation.

STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER ★ OVERALL 09
Mesmerising 3D Star Wars blaster with engaging missions and film-perfect sound effects. Great fun.

STAR WARS: SUPER BOMBAD RACING OVERALL 05
Banal cartoon kart racer. The Force is weak with this one.

STATE OF EMERGENCY OVERALL 06
A shallow but worryingly enjoyable game that puts the player at the centre of a riot.

STREET FIGHTER EX3 OVERALL 06
A decent enough 2D/3D fighting game, but is milking the series to death. There are better 2D fighters from the same company.

STREET HOOPS OVERALL 06
More about collecting fancy duds than having a decent game of basketball, which is why this hoops title misses from the line.

STUNTMAN ★ OVERALL 08
Won't have the wide appeal of the Driver games due to its difficulty, but it's an ingenious concept that thrills and entertains.

SUMMONER 2 ★ OVERALL 08
Follow-up to the RPG launch title. More action orientated than the original, but still an epic adventure for fans of fantasy.

SUPER TRUCKS OVERALL 04
Bland, arcadey racing that fails to convey the impression of racing mammoth trucks.

SUPERCAR STREET CHALLENGE OVERALL 04
A by-the-book arcade racing game round desolate cities. Nothing to recommend it.

SWORD OF THE SAMURAI OVERALL 07
Sword of the Samurai is a slow, ponderous, but intelligent game that combines strategy with gore.

TARZAN FREERIDE OVERALL 04
Based on a Disney film of the same name, this tries to be different with 'surfing' tree branches, but it doesn't work.

TAZ: WANTED OVERALL 05
Despite some neat cel-shading effects and amusing Looney Toons content, this platformer is a bit too bland to warrant attention.

TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT ★ OVERALL 08
Fantastically playable and graphically spectacular beat-'em-up. The tagging moves make it a worthwhile purchase.

TEKKEN 4 ★ OVERALL 09
Continuing the tradition of fighting game excellence. The first Tekken game to include free-movement.

TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN ★ OVERALL 08
An infusion of ninja style and killer gameplay across nine sumptuous levels. A great return to form for a classic title.

THE BOUNCER OVERALL 06
A fun, accessible brawler whose adventuring elements are fairly limited.

THE GETAWAY ★ OVERALL 09
Sony's answer to Grand Theft Auto, with a decidedly darker and nastier storyline. Offers an amazingly life-like replica of London.

THE HULK OVERALL 07
Not a smash-hit; but not damaged goods either. An enjoyable beat 'em' up; shame about those stealth sections though.

THE MUMMY RETURNS OVERALL 05
Sub-standard, adventure-based movie tie-in. You're better sticking to the more reliable Tomb Raider collection.

THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE OVERALL 06
It's Crazy Taxi! but with Bart and Homer behind the wheel.

THE SIMS ★ OVERALL 09
A one of a kind gaming experience that even your mum will enjoy, with extras to make your PC gaming friends jealous.

THE THING ★ OVERALL 08
Not only does it do justice to the classic horror film, but also introduces fear and trust issues to the survival-horror genre.

THE WEAKEST LINK OVERALL 04
You'll get more enjoyment playing along with the show than you will from putting up with the viper-tongued host.

THEME PARK WORLD OVERALL 07
Take on the role of a theme park tycoon for a day in this engaging god sim, where pleasing the crowds and getting those turnstiles a-spinning is your prime directive.

THIS IS FOOTBALL 2003 OVERALL 07
Has an excellent one-two passing system and is a solid football title, but is still plays in the shadow of Pro Evolution 2 and FIFA 2003.

THUNDERHAWK: OPERATION PHOENIX OVERALL 07
A brave attempt to blend arcade and sim with choppers.

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2002 OVERALL 06
Authentic golf sim, a tad undermined by a random control system.

TIME CRISIS 2 ★ OVERALL 08
PS2's first on-rails light gun title sets the standard for others to follow. Has a great two-player co-op mode.

TIMESPLITTERS ★ OVERALL 09
Fun, fast, frantic and inventive first-person shooter. Buy it for the addictive split-screen multiplayer madness.

TIMESPLITTERS 2 ★ OVERALL 10
Takes the multiplayer from TimeSplitters and adds heaps of options. Major visual upgrades, i-Link for 16-player games – the works!

TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL ★ OVERALL 10
Move over Snake, Sam's the new special agent in town! Splinter Cell is an innovative game with some very cool touches.

TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS ★ OVERALL 08
A little on the slow side but there's no doubting Lara's appeal. The original superstar is back!

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3 ★ OVERALL 09
Fantastic skate sim that's perfect to play whether you've got two minutes or two hours to spare.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4 ★ OVERALL 10
With some new moves, the series is taken in a new direction. Skate around, interact with locals and do things at your own pace.

TREASURE PLANET ★ OVERALL 08
An excellent take on the Disney movie of the same name, providing platform game goodness for younger gamers.

TUROK: EVOLUTION OVERALL 06
Boasts a wicked line-up of weapons and a variety of gaming styles, but suffers from crappy AI and frame rate issues.

TWIN CALIBER OVERALL 03
One of the shoddiest shooters around. Takes an interesting twin-pistol gaming concept and ruins it with slow gameplay, chronic control issues.

TWISTED METAL: BLACK ★ OVERALL 08
This is everything that you'd expect a Twisted Metal game to be on PS2 – and then some.

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE OVERALL 06
A very run of the mill soccer title which, with its very narrow focus on a single tournament, has extremely limited appeal. If you have Pro Evolution or FIFA, you don't need this.

UFC THROWDOWN OVERALL 07
Arguably the most realistic fighting game ever made, but extremely repetitive. One for fighting game nuts only.

UNREAL TOURNAMENT ★ OVERALL 08
Totally over-the-top first-person shooter. Makes for a nice alternative to Quake III, but is outclassed totally by TimeSplitters 2.

V-RALLY 3 ★ OVERALL 08
Not as instantly playable as WRC II Extreme or Colin McRae Rally 3 but effort pays off with some very satisfying racing.

V8 SUPERCAR RACE DRIVER ★ OVERALL 09
Real damage. Real V8s. Real Aussie tracks. Real fun. The best racing game seen so far on the PlayStation 2!

VICTORIOUS BOXERS OVERALL 04
Offbeat Japanese boxing title that lacks the killer punch. Pointless to track down while games such as Rocky are about.

VAMPIRE NIGHT ★ OVERALL 08
A vampire-blasting light gun extravaganza that looks great but has questionable replay value once the bad boys are all put to rest.

VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 EVOLUTION ★ OVERALL 08
Packed with things to do, VF4 still lacks the outright fun that makes Soul Calibur a game for everyone.

VIRTUA TENNIS 2 ★ OVERALL 08
Far and away the best Tennis simulation to grace the PS2. The World Circuit mode provides an awesome long term challenge.

WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED ★ OVERALL 08
It may be a little wet behind the ears but Unleashed has just as many thrills as its extreme brothers.

WAR OF THE MONSTERS OVERALL 07
War of the Monsters is a big, brash game that explodes with charm and burns brightly... but not for very long.

WIPEOUT FUSION ★ OVERALL 09
Style and substance are here in the most fully realised Wipeout yet. This future racer is as smart and extreme as it gets.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER 2003 OVERALL 07
Another feature-packed recreation of the sport from Codies, marred only by a lack of graphical flair.

WORLD DESTRUCTION LEAGUE: THUNDER TANKS OVERALL 07
Arcade tank sim that's brilliant in Four-player Deathmatch mode. Lacks lasting appeal in single-player mode, though.

WORMS BLAST OVERALL 06
A Tetris-like departure from the usual Worms fare, but one that lacks depth. Fans of the Worms games be aware this is more like Bust-A-Move than what you're used to.

WRC II EXTREME ★ OVERALL 09
Don't let the 'extreme' title fool you, this is pure rally realism. Not as pretty as Colin McRae Rally 3, but has all the official stuff.

WWE SMACKDOWN 4! 'SHUT YOUR MOUTH!' ★ OVERALL 08
This is without a doubt the most realistic representation of the WWE experience on a console yet.

X-MEN 2: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE ★ OVERALL 08
A quality action adventure that blends stealth with hand-to-hand combat. Only a few irritations deny it a higher score.

ZONE OF THE ENDERS ★ OVERALL 09
Absolutely brilliant for anime fans who want to see high-speed mech combat.

TOP 5
GAMES NOT TO PLAY WHEN HUNGOVER

1. WIPEOUT FUSION
"Christ my head is spinning. It's making it worse. Stop it Bwwworrchh..."

2. SILENT HILL 3

"I'm feeling queasy. Wish I hadn't eaten that bacon sar... aaacccchhsplash"

3. TIMESPLITTERS 2

"The screen is too big and it's too fast and loud. I feel a bit... bblloaargghh"

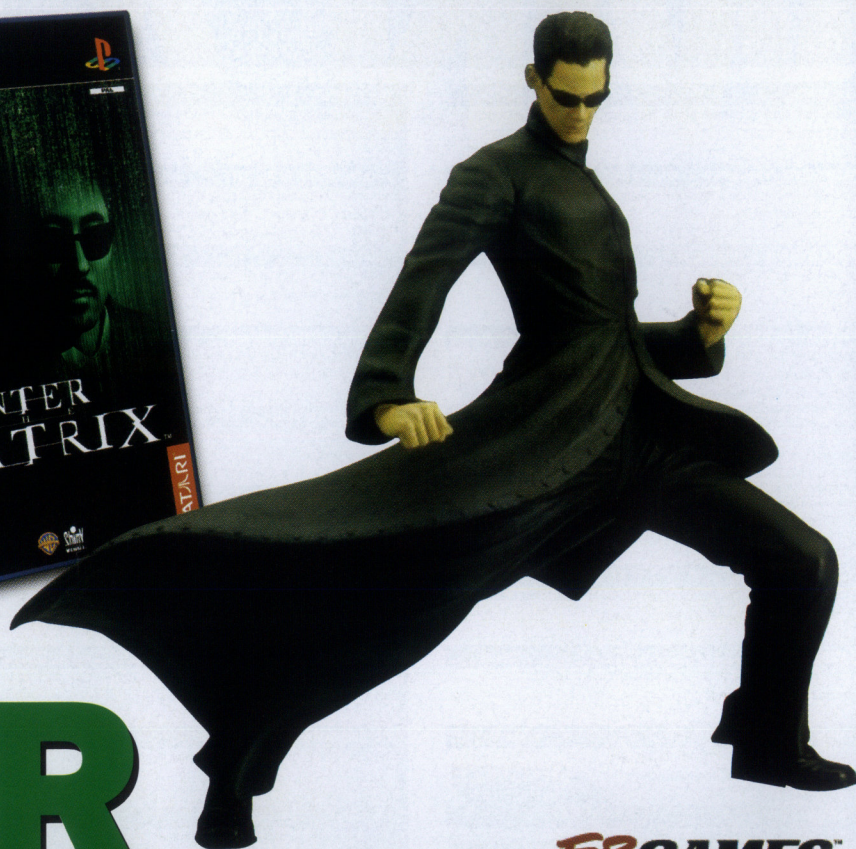
4. REZ

"No. Stop it! Playing it hungover just makes it even more intolerable!"

5. BURNOUT 2

"It's okay when you're playing it, but in the back seat? Hwwwaaargghh"

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GEAR!



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LOOKING FOR THE ULTIMATE MATRIX EXPERIENCE? Look no further than these incredible packs. Thanks to Atari, EB Games and Roadshow we have 20 awesome *Matrix* packs to give away. The lucky winners will be walking away with the intense PlayStation 2 game *Enter The Matrix* (normally \$109.95), the very cool Neo figurine (normally \$99.95) and the ultimate DVD *Animatrix* (normally \$39.95). We have twenty *Matrix* packs up for grabs. The first ten packs include the game, the figurine and the DVD. The second ten packs come with the game and the figurine.

To be in the running for the awesome *Matrix* packs, simply tell us in five words or less "Why you deserve to be The One?" Then follow the competition entry details at the bottom of the page and mark your entry "Matrix".

HOW TO ENTER - Send entries to OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au with the name of the competition in the subject line or alternatively, send envelopes via snail mail to: Official PlayStation Magazine, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 2022. Email entrants are entitled to one email per competition only.

Entries should be clearly marked and include: the name of the comp, your name, age, phone number and address. All competitions close September 20, 2003.

WIN A CAR!

MIDNIGHT CLUB II

Finally! Here's the final coupon needed to win the Midnight Club II-styled pocket rocket.

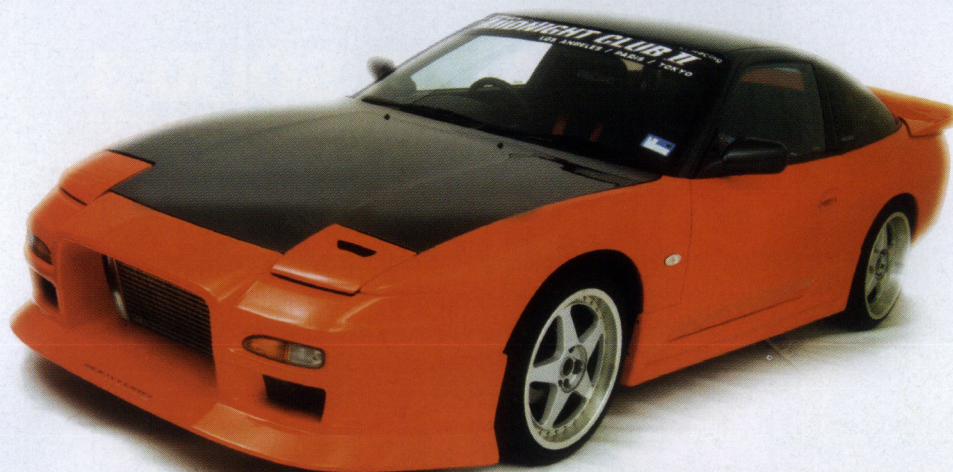


autosalon



PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE - AUSTRALIA

COMPETITION TERMS AND CONDITIONS: 1. This competition is open to Australian Residents only. 2. The decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. 3. The prize cannot be bartered and is not redeemable for cash. 4. The collection, use and disclosure of personal information provided in connection with this offer are governed by the privacy notice. 5. Photocopies will not be accepted. 6. Full terms and conditions are available via the following: a) visit <http://au.playstation.com/midnightclubcar>; b) from OPS2/Derwent Howard Reception, Level 3, 75 Grafton St, Bondi Junction NSW, 2022; c) via an email request at OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au



YOU'VE WAITED AND WAITED and now this one-of-a-kind *Midnight Club II* machine could be yours! OPS2, Rockstar and Auto Salon are excited to give you the chance to win the machine that we've been building since March 2003!

The car is a 1994 Nissan 180SX hatchback and it not only looks the goods (see for yourself in the photo), but will undoubtedly blow most other cars right off the road.

This is the second (and final) Official *Midnight Club II* Coupon. Coupon One appeared in the August Issue of OPS2 (you'll need both for a valid entry). Cut out and send both coupons into OPS2 along with all of your contact details and sit tight! One lucky reader will then be contacted and flown to Sydney for Auto Salon's final battle, taking with them, one key that could start the *Midnight Club II* car! Easy!

PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE - AUSTRALIA

OFFICIAL
MIDNIGHT CLUB II
COMPETITION

COUPON 2

HARRY'S PRACTICE

WITH THE TRIUMPHANT RETURN OF PITFALL HARRY coming soon, what better way is there to prepare for the arrival than by going in the draw to win yourself a copy of this cool game? Activision has kindly given us five copies to giveaway, so stop wasting time and start entering. To be in the running for a copy of *Pitfall Harry*, answer this simple question: "What was Harry's original game called?" Just follow the comp entry details at the bottom of page 96 (that's one on the left, over there) and mark your entry "The Pitts".



THE CUP OF LIFE

RUGBY FEVER WILL BE KICKING INTO OVERDRIVE NEXT MONTH WITH THE WORLD CUP AND WE'LL HAVE THE OFFICIAL REVIEW OF RUGBY 2004. FIND OUT HOW THE GAME PLAYS ON PS2!

NEXT MONTH
IN OFFICIAL
AUSTRALIAN
PLAYSTATION
MAGAZINE

SOUL CALIBUR 2

IS *TEKKEN* FINALLY DEAD? IS THIS THE BEST FIGHTING GAME EVER MADE? ONLY OPS2 CAN REVEAL ALL.

METAL GEAR SOLID 3

THE BRAND NEW SHOTS THEY DON'T WANT YOU TO SEE. AND SUPER SECRET PLAY AND PLOT FACTS!

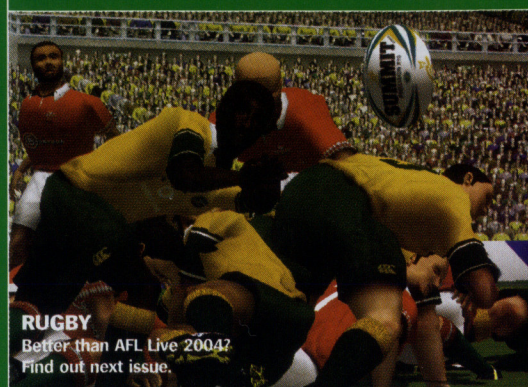
COLIN MCRAE 4

CHECK BACK NEXT MONTH FOR OUR EXCLUSIVE FEATURE AND AUSTRALIA'S ONLY PLAYABLE DEMO!

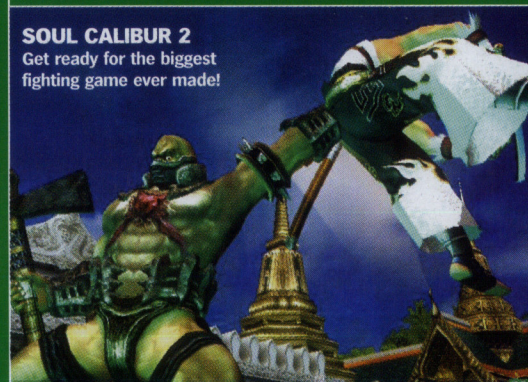
ANOTHER STACK OF FREE PS2 DEMOS...



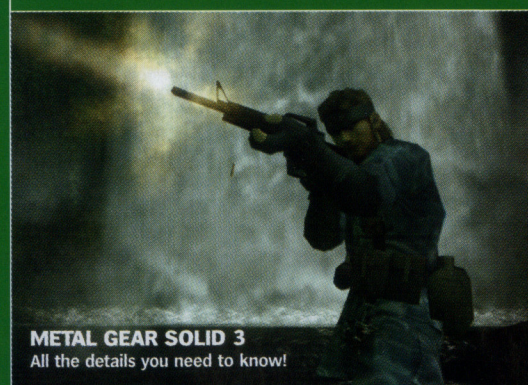
AUSTRALIA'S ONLY PLAYABLE DEMO DVD FEATURING: RUGBY 2004, SOUL CALIBUR 2, FREEDOM FIGHTERS, TRUE CRIME AND LOADS MORE! NO OTHER MAGAZINE PACKS SO MUCH VALUE ONTO ONE DEMO DISC!



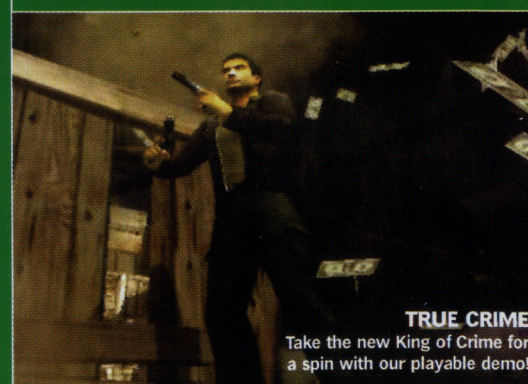
RUGBY
Better than AFL Live 2004?
Find out next issue.



SOUL CALIBUR 2
Get ready for the biggest
fighting game ever made!



METAL GEAR SOLID 3
All the details you need to know!



TRUE CRIME
Take the new King of Crime for
a spin with our playable demo!



THE SOUND OF NOW

A large, solid red circle with a white circle in the center, creating a bullseye effect, serves as a background for the "BASS STATION" text.

BASS STATION

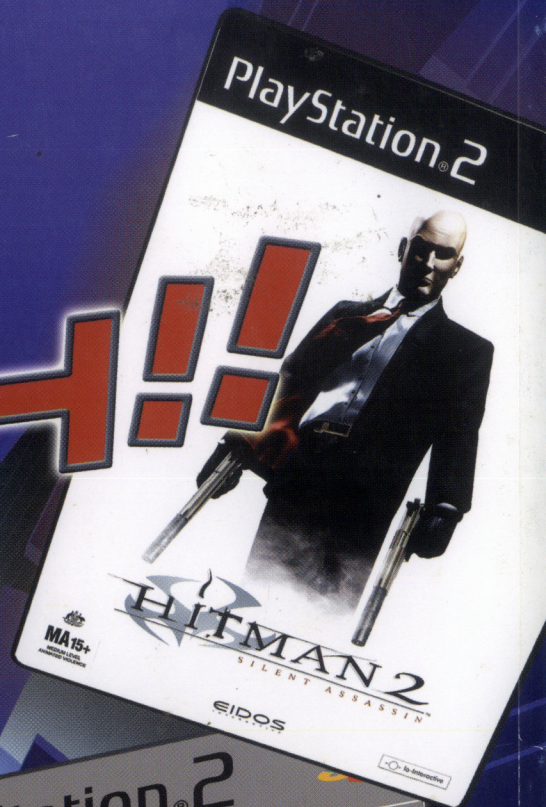
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